

A
PLAIN
AND FAMILIAR
EXPOSITION OF THE
Eleuenth and Twelfth Chapters
of the Prouerbes of
Salomon.

PROVERBS I. 5.

*A wise man shall beare and increase in learning, and a man of
vnderstanding shall attaine vnto wise counsels.*



AT LONDON,
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Henrie Sharpe. 1607.

PLANT
AND FAMILIA



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TO THE RIGHT WORSHIPFULL WIL-

LIAM FENYS Esquire, and Sir
WILLIAM COPE Knight, grace,
mercie and peace.



HE due regard which wee haue
of you both, for the speciall gifts
wherewith it hath pleased God
to grace you; hath moued vs to
present vnto you ioyntly this te-
stimonie of our vnfained loue.
We doe the rather publish this
Treatise vnder your names, be-
cause we would encourage you, to runne forward con-
stantly in that Christian race which you haue alreadie
so happilie begunne, and to answere that good expe-
ctation which is generally and iustly conceiued of you.
We haue long waited and much desired to be imploied
againe as formerly (through Gods mercie) wee haue
been. But being hitherto disappointed of that hope, and
esteeming an vprofitable life, to be a kinde of vncom-
fortable death; we thought it our bounden dutie to of-
fer our seruice to the Church, and furtherance to your
faith, in the best manner wee can, since wee may not vse
A such

The Epistle Dedicatorie.

such means as we would. As you have been attentive hearers whiles we preached, so (we doubt not) but you will be diligent readers of that which is here written. We shall esteeme it a sufficient gaine for our trauaile, if either your selues, or any other, may reape fruit by our labours. The God of all mercie increas his graces in vs all, and multiplie his blessings vpon vs, that our life and death may bring glorie to him, and cuerlasting peace to our owne soules.

Your Worships in all Christian
duties to be commanded,

Iohn Dod, Robert Cleauer.



TO THE GOD- LIE READER.



Christian-Reader, by meanes of our promise, we are growne into thy debt, which if God adde abilitie to our willingnes, thou shalt finde vs as readie to discharge. And for thy better assurance of our faithfull meaning herein, we haue communicated vnto thee our labours on these two Chapters, in part of paiment, untill we can proceede to the rest. Onely this we must intreate of thee, that thou wilt deale with vs, as thou wouldest with iust and honest debtors which duely pay thee money. If our coyne be currant, carrying trueneth and veritie, the stampe of Gods holy spirit, reiect it not though it be duskyish, without glittering shew, or curious workmanship. But if ought by mistaking hath escaped vs, that wanteth weight, or pronounceth not good mettall, returne it lovingly and in brotherly manner vnto vs, and we will doe our best indeyours to yeelede thee better matter for it. The eight first chapters a godly learned man hath traualled in, whose paines we expected before this time to haue inioyed with thee, and that caused vs to goe forwards, omitting the beginning, untill we come to the end. The methode we confesse, would be very preposterous and defectiue, were it not that

To the godly Reader.

*So good a supplie would reduce it into due order. And so we com-
mit the whole worke both of our writing, and thy reading, to
the direction and blessing of Gods holy spirit, whom we pray to
give thee understanding to know his will, with a faithfull heart
to beleue and obey the same, through Iesus Christ, Amen.
Drayton this seuenth of Nouember. 1606.*

Thine in all Christian duties,

Iohn Dod, Robert Cleauer.



AN EXPOSITION OF THE ELEVENTH CHAP- TER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER. XI.

Verse 1. *False balances are an abomination to the Lord: but a perfect weight pleaseeth him.*



Under false balances are comprehended all vniust weights, lines, and measures. And therewithall is condemned whatsoeuer kinde of guile, and deceit may bee found either in the buyer, or seller. As when that which is sold is defectiue either in quantitie, or qualitie, not being fit for the vse that it is bought for, or not correspondent to the price that is paid for it, or not answerable to the testimonie that is giuen of it. And with these doth *Amos* charge the wicked wealthy men of his age: *They make the Ephah, or measure small, and the Shekell, or price great, and falsifie the weights of deceit. That they may buie the poore for siluer. and the needie for shoes, and sell the refuse of their wheate.* So on the other side in the buyer, when he shall faile of all meete proportion betweene the price that he payeth, and the commoditie that he buieth, giuing farre lesse than the worth and valew of it: And where it is said, *They are abomination to the Lord it is*

not ment that his quarrell is against the insensible creatures, but he is displeased with the iniquitie of the persons, which make, vse, keepe, or allow them. Whereby the other clause may bee better vnderstood, that the Lord is pleased with such as doe vprightly vse them, and with loue of equitie exercise it in their traffique and touchants.

Doct. 1.

All instruments and meanes of falschood are hatefull to God. If God speake this but once, and in one place, and no where else but in this place, yet he is of sufficient authoritie to require credit to his word, because he that cannot lie hath spoken it, who also knoweth best both what doth offend, and please him: but hee doth often confirme it in the scriptures, that the multiplicitie of testimonies may the more forcibly perswade vs to beleue. The selfesame words in effect are not only repeated, but redoubled in this booke, and that sometimes in one chapter. *Diuers weights, and diuers measures, both these are euen an abomination to the Lord. Diuers weights are abomination to the Lord, and false ballances are not good: Cap. 10. 10. 23.*

Reasons.

Deut. 25. 15. 16.

First, his commandement is hereby violated: for he hath expressly forbidden such vnrighteous dealing: *Thou shalt not haue in thy bagge two manner of weights, a great and a small, neither shalt thou haue in thine house diuers measures, a great, and a small; but thou shalt haue a iust weight: a perfect, and a iust measure shalt thou haue, &c. For all that doe such things, and all that doe vnrighteouslie, are abomination to the Lord thy God.* Which is not so to be vnderstood, as though it were absolutely vnlawfull to haue diuers sorts of weights or measures, as ounces and pounds, as yards and elles, as peckes and bushels, &c. Neither yet to haue many of the same sort: for many may be needefull, according as men haue manifold occasions to vse them: but to haue them vnequall each to other, which ought to be of the same size, as some of larger content to buy with, and others of lesser quantitie to sell with, this is that which is here prohibited.

2.

Secondly, his ordinance by this is inuerted: for he hath instituted the vse of negotiation, market and exchange, for the mutuall benefit of both sides; and this is for the good of neither: for the one is endamaged in his purse, and the other in his conscience.

ence. He would haue commerce and traffique to proceede from loue, to be exerciſed in loue, and more to increaſe loue: and this courſe is altogether contrarie to loue, and a meanes to ingender vnkindnes and hatred. Hee requireth that iuſtice and equitie ſhould moderate theſe affaires, and *that no man ſhould oppreſſe or defraude his brother in any matter*: but here is filthie lucre moſt reſpected and followed, and our brethren wronged and beguiled. 1. Theſ. 4. 6.

Thirdly, this ſinne is ſo much the more lothed of God, by how much it is better liked of them that praſtiſe it. Their cloſenes and cunning in acting of it, doth for a time augment their wealth, and not impaire their credit, and therefore they count their courſe lawfull, and themſelues happie for ſuch prosperous ſucceſſe: becauſe man findeth no fault with them, they thinke that God findeth no falſehood in them: and ſeeing yet they haue no puniſhment inflicted vpon them, they dreame alſo that no wickedneſſe is committed by them. For ſo the Prophet complaineth; *Hee is a Merchant; the ballances of deceit are in his hand: hee loneth to oppreſſe. And Ephraim ſaid, notwithstanding I am rich: I haue found me out riches in all my labours: they ſhall finde no iniquitie in me, that were wickedneſſe.* Hoſ. 12. 7. 8.

Admonition, not onely to forbear all fraudulent and wrongfull dealing, but with hatred to deteſt it, and with horror to flie farre from it. That which is hurtfull to our brother is hatefull to God, and therefore can neuer bee helpfull to vs. If he iudge it vnrighteous we ſhall finde it vnprofitable: if it be damnable in his ſight, and therefore his ſoule doth hate it, it will at laſt bee in our ſenſe, and our ſoule ſhall rue it. It may bring monie and wealth, and raiſe vp mens ſtate and familie, but it will draw downe iudgements vpon familie, ſtate, and wealth, and monie, and make all to be execrable. For that which is ſpoken in another caſe, is alſo verified in this: *Bring not abomination into thine houſe, leſt thou bee accuſed like it, but utterly abhorre it, and count it moſt abominable, for it is accuſed.* Deut. 7. 26. As the gold, and ſiluer, and other coſtly matter, wherof the idols were made, and wherewith they were adorned, was execrable in reſpect of impietic; ſo is this trade of getting, and riches ſo gotten in regard of iniquitie. And therefore both

are very offensiue to the Lord: both are pestilent to mens families: both are perilous to their state: both are pernicious to their soules. For a cursed possession may make the person accursed, and bring the whole house to desolation. Which should perswade men not onely to make stay of getting goods vniustly, but to make no stay of ridding their hands iustly thereof. For as they sinne grieuouſlie which indirectly receiue that which is none of their owne; so doe they also that retaine it, and restore it not to the right owner. And therefore in *Micah* it is set as a note of sinners, and such as are obstinately sinfull, and which conceiue of God as a patron of their sinfulness, that vpon admonition giuen vnto them from the Lord, would not reforme their falsehood.

Micah. 6. 10.

Are yet the treasures of wickednesse in the house of the wicked, and the scant measure that is abominable? Shall I iustifie the wicked balances, and the deceitfull weights?

2

Reprooſe and terror of gamesters, and those that make Dice, Cardes, and Boules, with such like instruments of iniury, to be the measures of their trade, and the meanes of their maintenance. Thereby are they made as odious to God, as infestuous to men, and as great aduersaries to equitie, as they which by false weights doe wrong their chapmen. They being ashamed to appeare in their practise, doe secretly defraud men like theeuers that filch in a corner: but these impudently glorying in their sinfulness, doe openlie professe their purpose, like robbers that command mens purses by the hie way side. They take the way to bring some part of their neighbours goods to their hands, by receiuing much for a little: but these strue to draw euery part to themselves, by getting all for nothing. And for this cause whatsoever successe they haue, howsoever the world goeth with them, they speed unhappily. If they winne other mens mony, they lose their blessednes, and Gods gracious fauour: If they lose their owne monie, they get a curse, and Gods grieuous displeasure.

Doct. 2.

But a true weight, &c. The Lord doth not onely respect the pietie which is vied in his owne worship, but the truth and iustice that is performed to men.

When the Lord himselfe is asked what manner of men should dwell

dwell in his tabernacle, and reſt in his holy mountaine, that is, which ſhould haue a good eſtate here, and an habitation for euermore in heauen, he deſcribeth them by their innocent, and harmeleſſe behauiour towards their brethren. Hee that walketh vprightly, and *Plaſm. 15. 2.*
worketh righteouſlie, and ſpeaketh the truth in his heart. Hee, cer-
tenlie, regardeth that worke which hee ſo largely rewardeth with
ſuch wages: and hee is well pleaſed with that perſon in this life,
whom he will receiue to life euerlaſting: and equall it is with him,
that they which conuerſe with earthly people in righteouſneſſe,
ſhould alſo continue with heauenlie ſaints in glory.

Fiſt, they doe ſeruiſe herein to God himſelfe; for in conſcience *Reaſons.*
 of his will, and obedience to his word they giue themſelues to
 this vprighteneſſe.

Secondly, it is his owne worke, and proceedeth from himſelfe :
 for all righteouſneſſe is the grace, and fruite of his holic ſpirit. As
 fleſh and bloud, with nature, and reaſon did neuer yet beget any
 found pietie, and religion; ſo it neither will, nor euer can direct
 any mans heart to true iuſtice, and righteouſnes. 2

Thirdlie, trueth both in word and deed is a part of his glorious
 image, whereby his people are confirmed, and made like vnto
 him, and therefore he cannot but take delight in that which is ſo
 agreeable with his owne nature, and a liuely representation of
 himſelfe. 3

Conſolation to them that doe conſtantly, and conſcionable *Vſe.*
 addiſt themſelues to the exerciſe of equitie. None hath truly
 learned this, but ſuch as haue been apprentices in heauen, whom
 the Lord hath informed in the myſterie of this trade. *Ob.* But ma-
 nie others gaine more monie, and thriue faſter, and grow greater
 then they doe. *Sol.* But they gaine more comfort, and thriue bet-
 ter, and grow happier then all others doe. For howſoeuer it fa-
 reth with their ſtate for quantitie of earthly poſſeſſions, it cannot
 but goe well with their ſoules, for plentie of heauenlie graces, and
 though parāduenture they haue preſently but little ſubſtance in
 their houſes, yet there remaineth from them an ample treaſure in
 the heauens: and that which is beſt for the, is moſt firmly aſſured
 to them, which is Gods euerlaſting loue and fauour. Albeit ther-
 fore thy vocation bee meane and of no great account, and thy

stocke slender and of no great value, thy returne seldome, and of no great commoditie; yet if thou bee faithfull in a meane trade, with a small stocke, and a slow returne, all shall bee acceptable, all shall be profitable, all shall be comfortable. So often as thou hast mans custome to buy or sell with thee, thou hast Gods companie to reward and blesse thee; and whensoever thou dealest well with any, he taketh notice of it, to deale better with thy selfe.

Verse 2. *When pride commeth, then commeth contempt: but with the lowlie is wisdom.*

When pride commeth] that is, when it groweth to maturitie, hauing power to puffe vp mens hearts, and shewing it selfe in words, or workes, in countenance, apparell, or gestures, then commeth contempt, that is, shame then approacheth and is neere at hand, marching in the next ranke after this lostie hart, and insolent behaiour. As is to be seene in many who hauing bin first lifted vp in their owne haucie mindes, were afterwards cast downe by Gods righteous iudgemets, either into phrenesies, or grosse sins, or ruine of state, or obloquie for their former hidden faults now published at last to their great disgrace. The other part of the antithesis, containing the honour that doth accompanie humilitie, is argued by consequent, in this manner: When pride commeth, then commeth follie, which euer bringeth shame: but when humilitie commeth, then commeth wisdom, which is neuer without glorie.

Doct. 1.

Pride is a forerunner of shame and reproach. It is a common prouerbe ordinarie in the mouth of the people: Pride goeth before, and shame commeth after. And it is an holie prouerbe often vsed by Solomon in this booke: *Pride goeth before destruction, and an high minde before the fall.* Prou. 16. 18. & 18. 12. And it is a select prouerbe often vsed by Christ in the new Testament; *Whosoever exalteth himselfe shall bee brought low, and hee that humbleth himselfe shall be exalted.* Luk. 14. 11.

We see in buildings that when walls waxe thicker by hallownes and swelling, they will shortlie come lower by downefall and ruine; and so standeth the case with all proud persons, their
great

great heart doth threaten some great mischeefe to bee nigh vnto them. Which may be exemplified by diuers presidents in the scriptures, which are proposed as real examples, for euery man to take warning by. When *Nebuchadnezzar* was bragging of his Babell which he had built for his glorie, he was banished from all habitation, not hauing so much as a cottage, and like a beast made to lue among the the beasts in the fields, with ignominie. When *Haman* thought to ride on horseback and to be waited on like a King, hee was driuen to lackie on foote, and to waite attendance like a page: and purposing to hang *Mordecai* on high to honour himselfe, he prepared an high gallowes to bee hanged on himselfe. When *Herod* thought himselfe good enough to take vpon him the state and honour of a god, the Lord declared him to be bad enough to be deuoured of contemptible vermine.

First, they haue God to bee their enemy, *he resisteth them*, and *Reasons.*
they are all an abomination vnto him: not onely some arrogant fellows that haue proud hearts and beggars purses, but euen such also as sit vpon princely thrones, and beare kinglie Scepters, and weare imperiall Diadems. And if he see them to be abomination, and doth therefore abhorre them, they shall appeare abominable, and men will despise them. Iam. 4. 6.
Prou. 16. 5.

Secondly, they are fooles, as the text it selfe intendeth, and therefore cannot but behaue themselues foolishlie, *like drunkards* 2
Hab. 2. 5.
which are ouercome with wine. They are sinfull fooles, more destitute of grace then of wit. For proud behauiour is the foame or froath that proceedeth from much wickednes, and a proud heart is a prison wherein they are withheld from comming to repentance. And so their owne follie, and Gods wisdom; their owne sinfull waies, and Gods righteous iudgements; their owne impenitencie, and Gods seueritie will bring them to the possession of their inheritance, and that *is shame and dishonour*, how highlie sooner they haue been exalted. Prou. 3. 35.

Thirdlie, they are sacrilegious persons, and robbe God of his glory, which is most proper and pretious vnto him, and therefore it is equall that he should strippe them of the honour which is so much desired of them. 3

Reproofe of their follie that vse pride as a stirrop to mount vpon
thereby *vsē.*

thereby to promotion and credit, that thinke it the onely way to preferment, if they can set forth themselves with some ostentation, and lift vp their eye-brows aboue their brethren. And this is growne almost to an vniuersall contagion, wherewith the greatest number of states and ages, of sexes, and persons in all places, are dangerouslie infected. Some thereby seeking to be admired, others to be aduanced, many to be feared, and al to be better satisfied in the accomplishment of their desires. But how manie loose by seeking, and sinke, by aspiring, and runne into reproch by hunting after vaine estimation? whiles they leaue their standing, and would rise aboue the toppe of their places, they faile of their footing, and fall downe to the bottome.

2

Instruction to be as much afraid of pride, as of shame, and euen of secret conceitednes within, no lesse the of open discredit without, and therefore to vse al good remedies to cure this dangerous inflammation of such a windie stomacke. And first for this purpose let euery man take heede that he bee not illuded with the glosses and colourable appearances of knowledge and wisdom, or anie other good parts of nature or grace in himselfe, when in trueth they are nothing but shews and shadowes. For diuers by an overweening conceit haue themselves in hie admiration, when others to whom they are better knowne, haue them in great derision. And albeit others either in flatterie, or good opinion should commend vs for those good things which wee are priuie to our selues not to be in vs, yet let vs not receiue the doubtfull testimonie of straungers against the euident witnesse of God, and our owne consciences. For this were as absurd as if a needie creature pinched with penurie, and almost hunger-staruen, should bee brought to beleue that he swimmied in plentie and were a liberrall house-keeper, hauing his table alwaies furnished with varietie of dishes; or one deepe lie indebted, and readie to breake for want of abilitie, should bee induced to thinke himselfe the onelie monied man in the countrie, sufficient in wealth to lend and to giue to many others. Secondlie, when God hath graced any with excellent gifts which are not adulterate, and counterfeited, but such as are currant, and able to abide the touchstone, and to hold weight in the ballance, yet as they feele what they haue, so let them

them find what they want: as they see their graces and vertues, so let them search into their corruptions, and vices: as they haue a good conscience in the performance of many good duties, so let them consider the innumerable sinnes that they haue committed, the multitude of seruices which they haue neglected, the hypocrisie, infidelity, vachearefulness, and other imperfections that haue stained their best words and actions: and these will helpe to hold downe their hearts in humilitie, and take away all matter of glorying. For the best in the world shall haue cause to blush and hang downe their heads, if they make comparison betweene that they are, and that which they ought to be. Though thy knowledge bee great, yet how much art thou ignorant of that thou mightest haue knowne, if thou hadst been as diligent to seeke it; as God was to offer it vnto thee? Though thou haue faith, and loue and repentance, and by vertue thereof dost shew forth the fruites of the spirit in holie obedience, yet how small time hast thou spent, how soeuer hast thou trauailed, and how little ground hast thou gotten in this way that leadeth to eternall life? But in the course of sinfulness diddest thou not begin the race soone, and runne swiftly, and come backe againe slowlie? Thirdly, it will much diminish a selfe-liking, and too great opinion of our owne excellencie, if wee turne our eyes without enuie to the excellent graces of knowledge and discretion of zeale, and moderation, and of all other amiable gifts of our brethren, wherein they goe beyond vs. And this is the receipt which the holie ghost prescribeth to the Philippians against this verie maladie: *Let nothing, saith he, bee done in contention. or vaine glory, but in meekenes of Phil. 2. 3. 4. mind, let every one esteeme others better then himselfe. Look not euery man on his owne things, but euery man also on the things of other men.* Lastlie, consider the hand which ministreth euery good thing that we enioy, whether it bee gift of nature, or of grace, or of outward possession; whether it concerne the bodie, or the minde, the state, or the dignitie. *All is of God, all is from God, and all is for God, and therefore let all the glorie be given to God. What hast thou, saith S. P. 1. ul, that thou hast not receiued? If thou hast receiued it, why gloriest thou as though thou haddest not receiued it?* 1. Cor. 4. 7. It becommeth not a beggar that liues of the almes

basket to bragge of his meate, nor insolentlie to compare with him, or his, that relieueth him in his miserable necessitie.

Dof. 2.

But with the lowlie] Euerie humble man is also indued with wisdom. Lowlie and wise bee so farre conuertible as that the one can neuer be affirmed of any, without the other: the habit of humilitie doth inferre the possession of wisdom, and the want of either doth euict the priuation of both.

Reasons.

First, the fountaine from whence lowlinesse floweth, doth alwaies in the same current send forth the streames of wisdom. The Lord Iesus doth neuer deriue to any the power and ability of subduing his heart, but he giueth him also sound knowledge how to obtaine it, and holie vnderstanding how to vse it.

2

Secondly, God himselfe is the instructour of all humble persons, and frameth their hearts to be teachable, that they shall not faile to learne of him, and therefore must needs receiue wisdom from him. This is agreeable to the promise which hee maketh, *Psal. 25. 9. Them that bee meeke will he guide in iudgement, and teach the humble his way.* He giueth grace and guidance with his precepts, for minde, and heart, for knowledge, and affection, for will, and conscionable practise.

3

Thirdly, the happinesse which they procure to themselues doth giue a cleere testimonie of their wisdom. They enioy the fauour of God, and the friendship of Gods people. In their hearts they haue peace, ouer their affections they haue power. They are alwaies in the way of preferment, either to come to honour in a great place, or for honour to come to them in a meane place. For euerie state they are fitted: whiles they are to be tried with aduersitie, they can beare it without impacience; when they shall be called to prosperitie, they can vse it without insolencie: as long as they continue in this world they are rightfull possessours of the earth; as soone as they depart to an other world, they shall be glorious inhabitants of heaven. In which respects the spirit of God saith, that *it is better to be of an humble mind with the lowlie, then to deuide the spoiles with the proud, Prou. 16. 19.* The meanest and most afflicted vnderling that is humble and meeke, is in farre better case then the mightiest and most puissant conquerour that is proude and haughtie.

Psal. 37. 11.

Reprooffe

Reproofe of such as deride their simplicitie for vndergoing so manie molestations, and charge them with follie for not facing out matters with an impudent countenance, and condemne them of madnesse, because they seeke not pompe and earthlie excellencie. But it is not because the humble want wisedom, but because wisedom seemeth foolishnesse to fooles, and such as are destitute of vnderstanding. They looke vpon their troubles, but feelee not their comforts: they see their persecutions, but foreseee not their deliuerance: they behold their present condition in afflictions, but discern not of their happines to come in glorie.

Instruction to make most account of their counsels and company, seeing they are best of all stored with wisedom and knowledge. None are so well able to giue aduice as they: for though others may haue more countenance and greatnesse, yet they attaine not to so much counsell and goodnes. None are so readie to giue aduice as they: for they doe it most willingly, and cheerefully, with all mildnesse, and kindenes. None are so much blessed in the aduice which they giue as they: For their prayers are forcible with God, and Gods presence is effectuell with them for assistance in such acceptable seruices.

Verse 3. *The vprightnesse of the iust shall guide them: but the forwardnesse of the transgressours shall destroy them.*

By vprightnesse is not meant an extrauagant well meaning without further rule or warrant, as though good intents were competent guides of our waies to saluation: but the sinceritie of an heart faithfullie, though not perfectlie willing to beleue and obey that which it knoweth, and resolutelie, though not absolutelie, desirous to know that which God shall reueile vnto it. Now this is said to guide righteous men, that is, shall procure good direction from the Lord, both for his seruice, and their owne happines, and make them tractable to follow the same. Contrarie to this is the condition of the wicked, who are not ledde with vprightnesse, but carried with perversenesse, and therefore missed by the same to their vndoing. For thus standeth the opposition: the vprightnesse of the iust shall guide them in the way, and so pre-

serue them: but the frowardnes of the wicked will keepe them from the way, and so destroy them.

Dott. 1.

The vprightnesse] Every one that is truly godlie hath a faithfull guide and counsellour in his owne breast. A sound heart is the sterne of the soule, and a good conscience is the pilot to gouerne it, which will leade him thorow the whole course of his life, till hee come to the haugh of safetie and blessednes. So is the vprightnesse of *Iob* commended, that it directed him to the feare of God, and caused him to eschew euill. So is the soundnes of *Zacharie* and *Elizabeth* notified, that by vertue thereof they walked in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord without reproofe. And so is the sinceritie of all blessed persons extolled and praised by the same effects in the hundred and nineteenth Psalm, *that they keepe the commandements of God, and worke no iniquitie.*

Psal. 119. 2. 3.
Reasons.

1

First, it will stirre vp men diligentlie to seeke for knowledge and vnderstanding, attending daily as suters at wisdomes gate in all the ordinances of God. When hee speaketh, they will bring an eare to hearken: When he teacheth, they will bring an heart to learne. When neede requireth, they will vse their lippes to aske counsell: in the word they will digge for wisdome: by prayer they will call for assistance: by meditation they will applie all good instructions. And so seeking of God with an whole heart is set in the scriptures, as an effect of vprightnesse, and a cause of walking in the law of the Lord. *Psal. 119. 2.*

2

Secondlie, where a good conscience is present, there the word of God is neuer absent: for that doth alwaies dwell with fidelitie and truth. The same heart that entertaineth the one, doth euermore enioy the other. And that dealeth faithfullie with them that be faithfull: it will not suffer them to wander aside thorow want of guidance, or to fall into mischeefes for fault of direction. It shall leade thee, saith one scripture, *when thou walkest; it shall watch for thee when thou sleepest, and when thou wakest it shall talke with thee. Thine eares shall heare a word behind thee,* saith another scripture, *saying, this is the way, walke in that, when thou turnest to the right hand or to the left.*

Prou. 6. 12.

Isai. 30. 21.

Thirddie, the spirit of God is alwaies in them that are vpright and true hearted, it moueth them to aske, to heare, to pray, to
reade

reade, and to meditate: it maketh the word effectuall to speake to their soules, also flexible to yeeld to the word, it worketh sound iudgement in the mind, holie affections in the heart, alacritie and readinesse in the will, faith in the whole soule, and sincere sanctitie in the conuersation. Hereof the Apostle speaketh to the Romanes: *As manie as are lead by the spirit of God are the sonnes of God.* And it is as true on the other side, as manie as are the sonnes of God, are lead by the spirit of God: for this is euer reciprocal, and conuertible.

Confutation of the erroneous opinion whereby manie illude themselves, and their false bollings whereby they would deceive others. They roue abroad in all the waies of sinfulness, in euery by-lane of licentiousnesse, in ignorance, pride, wantonnes, vithrines, crueltie, blasphemie, &c. Yee may finde them almost euery where sauing in religious and honest exercises, and those they flie from, as if they were gaoles and dungeons to hold them in: and yet they thinke, and say, and face it out, that their heart is honest, though their life be lewd: all is well within, though all be naught without: they haue as good soules to God as the best, although they serue Satan as much as the worst. If these men haue vprightnesse, vprightnes hath lost her wonted vertue, and ceaseth to be vpright. For that which was vprightnesse in *Salomons* time, and in all former ages was more faithfull, and forcible to preserve them whom it tooke charge of (as it doth all in whom it inhabiteth) from such inordinate and vicious behauiour. To which may be added also another brood of a wandering and vagrant mind, altogether vnsetled in all points of religion. They heare of multiplicite of opinions, and the differences of mens iudgements one from another: some are Papists, some are Protestants, some are Brownists, so that they know not what to beleue, nor whom to trust, and therefore iudge it their readiest way to credit none of them all, and not cleaue to any side. But the righteous are not tossed vp and downe with such waues of vncertainetie and doubtfulness: sinceritie leaueth not men to shift for themselves, that for want of due information in the waies of God, they should walk in flat Atheisme: The Lord promisseth better things to his people that faithfully serue him. *What man is hee that fea-*

reth the Lord? him will he teach the way that he shall chuse, Psalme 25. 12. Are ye left then without direction? then ye are found without righteousness. Doth not God teach you his way? then yee are utterly void of his feare.

- 2 Reproose of them that commit themselues to the leading of contrarie guides, which withhold all their passengers from sincerities counsell and direction, and that is to vaine pleasure, to filthie lucre, to carnall reason, to brutish lust, to the example and fashion of the wicked world, and to the sinfull motions which the diuell himselfe most craftilie suggesteth. These are they that almost in all places are taken vp for leaders, they are neuer without worke, they haue continuall imployment, and therefore it plainly appeareth that there is little vprightnesse, and that is as little regarded, & as few iust persons there are to be guided by it.

- 3 Consolation against the discouragements wherewith manie faithfull Christians are assaulted in respect of the manifold perils which they passe thorow. When they look abroad into the world, they see all kinds of inducements to euill, by perswasions, by threatning, by examples, and sophisticall defences; their carnall friendes would allure in kindnesse, their craftie foes would illude them by cunning, the violent tyrants would compel the by force. When they search into themselues, they finde corruptions, ignorance, errors, fearefulnesse, and inconstancie, which causeth them to fall into many feares, and doubts of their perseuerance. How, say they, shall we persist and hold out in the dangerous dayes? How if the word of God should be taken from vs? how if deceiuers should be turned in among vs? how then shall we find the way to euerlasting saluation? The holie Ghost telleth you in this place, if your hearts be righteous, and plaine, and honest, your vprightnesse shall leade you, the spirit of God will reach you, and his grace will establish you. Which *S. Iohn* doth also testifie, for the confirmation of such as were in the same case: *These things, saith he, haue I written vnto you concerning them that deceiue you. But the anointing which you receiued of him dwelleth in you: and yee neede not that any man teach you: but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and it is true, and is no lying, and as it taught you, it shall abide in him.*

But

But the forwardnesse] Wicked sinners are greatest workers of *Deft. 2.*
 their owne woe. *They shall be taken in their owne wickednes,* saith
 the sixt verse: *they shall fall in their owne wickednes,* saith the
 fift: *their forwardnes shall destroy them,* saith this. Whereby it ap-
 peareth that their miserie commeth not from others, as an acci-
 dentall occasion, but groweth from themselues as the proper
 cause: neither is it an ordinarie euill that is recurable, but a des-
 perate ruine that is remedlesse: neither yet is it the subuersion of
 their state, or killing of their bodie, which is but temporarie, but
 the perdition both of bodie and soule which is euerlasting. To
 this agreeth that which is spoken to the same purpose, in the fift
 chapter: *His owne iniquitie shall take the wicked himselfe, and hee* *Pro. 5. 22. 23.*
shall be holden with the cords of his owne sinne. He shall die for fault of
instruction, and for going astray through his owne follie.

Here is a description of euery obstinate and contemptuous sin-
 ner, their wickednes doth worke destruction by degrees. It first
 apprehendeth them as an officer: it keepeth them afterwards in
 stockes, and bolts, as a Iayler. And lastlie, it putteth them to death,
 as an executioner.

First, they despise the patience, and long sufferance, the kind- *Reasons.*
 nes and goodnes of God which waiteth for their repentance, and
 therefore *through the hardnes of their hearts heape to themselves*
wrath against the day of vengeance, Rom. 2. 4 5. *I*

Secondly, *they grieve and vex the spirit of God,* which offereth *2*
 grace vnto them, and therefore *he turneth to be their enemye.* They *I sai. 63. 10.*
 with their peruersenes doe resist him, and hee with his power
 will cast downe them. And so the Prophet testifieth in the Psalme:
With the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure, but with the froward thou
settest thy selfe to wrestle.

Thirdly, they scorne and despise the word and wisdom of *3*
 God, and as much as in them is, cause others also to reiect it, and
 therefore it is iust with the Lord *to make them eate the fruit of their*
owne waies, and to fill them with their owne denices, that is, *to bring*
them to a fearefull destruction. Prou. 1. 30. 31.

Terror of them that practise sinne of purpose to offend them *vs.*
 which dislike of their lewde waies. They will breake the Sabbath
 in despite of them that would haue them better exercised: they
 will

will sweare, they say, and stare too, to anger such as admonish them of their vnlawfull othes. Sillie creatures and miserable wretches, will they cut their owne throats to grieue others with the sight of their bloud? will they strangle themselues that others might weepe for their cursed end? Their boisterous stubbernesse may bring a short sorow to others that hate their sinnes, and loue their soules, but a perpetuall shame to themselves, which ioyned with their sinnes against their soules.

Verse 4. Riches auaille not in the day of wrath: but righteousness deliuereth from death.

THese wordes seeme to containe an anticipation, or preuenting of an obiection, which might bee moued against the latter point of the former verse. What speake you of destruction to come vpon wicked men? I trust you will not extend it to all: for many of them are substantiall wealthy men, of great state, and abilitie. Who can destroy them? What shall their power, and riches doe the while? To this it is here answered, that riches auaille not in the day of wrath: their wealth can neither withstand the strokes of God, nor lessen them, nor make them any whit the more able to beare them, when his anger doth execute iudgements, and when his iudgements declare his anger. But righteousness is that which deliuereth from death, and all other miseries, that the sting thereof shall neuer make any man miserable. See the more full handling and prosecution of these words, in the second verse of the tenth chapter.

Verse. 5. The righteousness of the upright shall direct his way, or make his way straight, or euene: but the wicked shall fall in his owne wickednesse.

Here he addeth to that which he had begun in the third verse, and sheweth that sinceritie, & righteousness do not only lead men to a good way, and tell them what is their dutie, and fit to be performed, but maketh the way passable for them, and them constant and prosperous in it. To the which againe is opposed the

the way of the wicked, euen their owne sinfull course of life, being crooked and cragged, and rough, and rugged, and full of manifold perils wherein at the last they fall and perish.

Godly men haue not onely a commaundement, but abilitie *Doct.* giuen vnto them to walke in the Law of God. Their faithfulnessse doth leuell their way, and paue it before them, wherein they find not onely equitie, but ease also with delight and safetie. And so much the Prophet doth intimate when he saith, *The waies of the Lord are righteous, and the iust shall walke in them: but the wicked shall fall therein.* *Hos. 14. 10.*

First, the affections sanctified do al ioyne hands in forwarding a man to a constant proceeding in godlines. The loue of God, and the hope of reward doe overcome, and subdue all difficulties, and dangers, and beare downe all the impediments that may stoppe him by discouragements: and the feare of God, and dread of his displeasure doth suppress the force of worldly lusts, and beate downe the conceits that may draw him to presumption. *Reasons.*

Secondly, the experience of Gods presence, fauour and blessing is very effectuell to continue their obedience. For hauing tasted how good the Lord is to them that feare him, they cannot liue without his companie, and that is no where to bee inioyed, but in the way of righteousness. *2*

The Lord himselfe both by grace and providence doth helpe them in this worke. He giueth vertue and power to the ministry of his word, to prepare a way betweene himselfe and the hearts of his people, that there may bee an intercourse for one to come mutually to the other, as *S. Luke* testifieth: *Euerie vallie shall bee filled, and euery mountaine and hill shall bee brought low, and crooked things shall be made straight, and the rough waies shalbe made smooth.* *Luk. 3. 5.* *3*

He also measureth out a meete state for them, and maketh such a mixture or composition of prosperitie and aduersitie, of blessings and crosses, of comforts and sorrowes, as is most wholesome for their soules, and directeth all the occurrents that befall them to the furtherance of their saluation. And hereof *Isaiah* speaketh, saying: *The way of the righteous is euennes, or equities, thou wilt*

weigh out a iust path for the righteous. He will ballance out euerie thing that concerneth them in gold weights, that there shall not be the least defect, or excesse that might turne to their hurt.

Vfe.

Confutation of their pernicious illusions y^e thinke it impossible to walke in the waies of God, & therfore iudge it nothing dangerous to stray out of them at their pleasure. The preachers, say they, doe teach that which none can obserue, euerie bodie doth contrary, and we must do like others, or els we should be counted nobodie. They lay too much vpon vs for praying often and hearing of sermons, and reading the scriptures, and keeping the sabbath: and so do they also too much restraine vs of pleasures, and profits, of libertie in speeches, and freedome in apparrell. We must follow our sports: for take away delights, and take away life. Wee must vse what meanes wee can for our state, and make the most of our owne: wee must in companie behaue our selues like the companie, according to their talke we must talke, and bee merrie according to their mirth: for an oath, we cannot alwayes auoide it, it is but a small matter now and then to sweare a little. They would haue vs to become saints on earth, but it will not bee, our nature cannot like of such precisenes, &c. And thus they make the easie yoke of Christ an importable burthen, and condemne his ministry of rigour, in requiring obedience, and iustifie themselves in disobedience. But leaue this shifting, and deale in good earnest, and speake the trueth plainely. Our sinnes, and rebellions, say, haue stopped vp our way, and we haue no iustice, nor vprightnesse to open it vnto vs: wee are slaues, and bondmen to corruption, and held in thraldome and subiection of it. Otherwise the strength of the world, and the streame of the times could not carrie you away so strongly. For *Noah* being a righteous man could liue righteously in an age giuen ouer wholly to vnrighteousnesse. The seruices of God would not be so tedious vnto you, as that by no meanes you should bee brought to exercise them. For to vpright men they are not onely possible, but pleasant, their soule longeth for them, they hunger and thirst after them, nothing is so much desired of them. Voluptuousnes, impietie, pride, and other lusts would not be so sweete vnto you, or so mightie in you, that you should neither be willing to leaue them, nor able to forsake

for sake them. For where the spirit of God is, there is libertie. All good men abhorre these sinnes, they pray against them, they strue against them, they preuaile against them. Grace ouercometh the flesh, and maketh them doe that which the word requireth, and shun that which the word forbiddeth, and be that which the word prescribeth. Though they performe not good things perfectly, yet they practise them faithfully: though they cast not off all euill fully, yet with hatred they resist it truly: though they haue so many infirmities as make them oft to sinne, yet they haue so much holinesse, as maketh them alwaies saints.

Verse 6. The righteousness of the upright deliuereth them: but the transgressours shall be taken in their owne wickednes.

THis verse, as it may appeare, is annexed to the former for confirmation of the point therein contained, that righteousness doth direct the way of vpriight men, both to holy conuersation, and happy state. Against the which a doubt may rise from the shew of the contrarie, because that good men are sometimes plunged in great calamities, and sometimes in great transgressions: and therefore their way seemeth as indirect, as if they were wicked, and their righteousness to doe them as little good as if they had none at all. Now this scruple he remoueth by shewing what benefit it bringeth, that then especially they haue the vse of it, when they fall into such distresses. For then the fruit thereof is most for their comfort when it shall deliuer them out of dangers, out of troubles, out of feares, out of temptations, out of sinnes, and from destruction. Yet not by strength of it owne, but by the power of God: not according to their worthines in way of desert, but according to his goodnes in way of reward: not extended to all men that doe good workes, but restrained to vpriight men whose workes are good. And for the clearer illustration of their blessed estate he bringeth in for contrarie, the miserable condition of the wicked, opposing transgressours to vpriight persons: their mischief to the others iustice: their perill to the others protection: the one part inclosed in the net of troubles is yet assured of safe escape by meanes of their graces, the other abroad at the

baire of prosperitie shall certainly fall into snares by meanes of their wickednesse.

The doctrine which the former clause might minister, shall be as conueniently spoken of in the eight verse: and that which is to be raised out of the latter, hath beene already handled in the third.

Verse 7. *When a wicked man doeth his expectation perisbeth, and the hope of his power shall perish.*

THe meaning is, that euery sinfull mans affection of hoping, and happinesse hoped for, and strongest meanes to attaine to his hope, shall end with his life, and die at his death, and vanish away at the time of his destruction. The substance of the point hath been handled in the eight and twentieth verse of the former chapter, and therefore in this place we wil onely note the circumstance of the time.

Def.

The confidence of vngodly men is disappointed at their greatest neede.

He neuer had good by any hope, which hath not the fruition of his hope at his death. Then either it setteth a man in possession of his blessednes, or else casteth him off into misery, woe, and perdition for euer. Though a man should neuer obtaine his desire in any earthly thing during his life, yet if he inioy saluation after this life, he hath failed of nothing. Though a man should misse of nothing that his heart could wish for, whiles breath is in his bodie, yet if hee bee damned when the soule goeth out of his bodie, hee hath neuer gained any thing. And this is the scope of *Iob* his speech, when he saith, *What hope hath the hypocrite though he hath heaped vp riches, when God taketh away his soule?* Euen now in his deepest aduersitie, hee would not change state with the most plausible wicked, in their highest prosperitie. For hee is sure that the end of his life will finish his sorrow, and begin his felicitie, and therefore is willing to resigne vp his spirit into the hands of God: but their hope doth depart with their breath, and their damnation doth come with their death, and therefore God must wrest away their soules from them.

Iob 27. 8.

Reasons.

First, they shall then stand before the iudgement seate of God him-

himselfe, and that which hee speaketh they must heare, and that which they heare, they must see, and that which they heare and see, they must also suffer : for execution will accompanie the sentence. Heere they would not beleue his testimonie, that their case was so bad as his word declared : there they shall feelee it to bee worse then they could conceiue of. Heere when hee denounced plagues against their sinnes, they proclaimed peace to their soules; there they shall finde the plagues according to their sinnes, and faile of the peace which they promised to themselves. Here he spake vnto them in goodnes, that vpon their repentance they might obtaine euermore mercie : there *bee will* Psal. 2. 5.
speake vnto them in anger, and for want of repentance will punish them eternally with iustice.

Secondly, the fearefull iudgement of God vpon their hearts, that they should not see how they were illuded in their expectation, vntill their death : when the case is remediless. If the vanitie of their hope were discovered to them before, they might cast it off sooner, and lay a new foundation of a better; whereas resting still vpon the stabilitie of that, it breaketh, when it cannot be repaired; and they fall, when they can neuer rise againe. If the five Math. 25.
 foolish Virgins had found their want of oile before the bridegrome was comming, they might in time haue provided themselves, and be readie to enter with him to the wedding, before the dore was shut. If they which presumed so much of Christ his acquaintance (because they had eaten & drunk in his company, and Luk. 13. 26, 27.
 heard him preach amongst them) had knowne before hand what small account hee would haue made of them, they might haue vsed better meanes whiles time serued, to grow into his fauour.

Thirdly the prerogative and priuiledge of Gods people would be much infringed, if wicked men should haue hope with them in the life to come, for therein standeth the contrarietie between them. *The wicked, saith the Scripture, shall bee cast away for his lewdnes: but the righteous hath hope at his death,* Prou. 14. 32. For the present it commeth to passe commonly, that bad men are full, and good men are hungry, the one sort doe laugh, and the other waile and weepe, as our Sauour testifieth, Luk. 6. 25. and therefore hereafter their conditions shall bee changed on both

sides: the pleasure of the one shall bee turned into paine, and the sorrowes of the other into endlesse comforts. As it is said by the Apostle concerning the godlie, that if in this life onely they had hope, they were of all most miserable; so it may be spoken touching the godlesse, that if in the life to come also they had hope, they were of all men most happie.

Pse. 1.

Reproofe of their folly which liue in hope, that the time of their death will beget them hope, and not destroy it. They know that now they are sinfull persons, without all grace, and goodnes; but they trust that then they shall be conuerted, and brought in a moment to repentance. They know that now they stand in state of damnation, and if they should presently come to iudgement, they must needs perish; but they trust at the last gaspe to call vpon God for mercie, and thereby get pardon for all their sinnes, and so their soules shall bee saued. As though death, and the pangs thereof were appointed for the preferment of Gods vngodly enemies. They haue bestowed themselues in the seruice of sinne, and spent their daies in rebellion against the Lord, and doe they looke for reward thereof to bee crowned with glory? Are theeves, and robbers, are cutpurfes, and other malefactours therefore bound ouer to the Assises, that they may bee put in commission, and called vp to the bench?

2

Instruction to confirme our hope by putting our soules out of all perill of perishing afore our death or sicknes, or any other danger, least our euidence be to seek when our cause is to be tried. Let euery one of vs vpon apparance of election, by faith, and the fruits of sanctification, be able to say as trulie, though not with as much feeling of assurance as the Apostle did: *I am perswaded that neither death, nor life, nor Angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall separate us from the loue of God which is in Christ Iesus.* This will make our life truely prosperous, and profitable, and our death blessed and comfortable, and our state in the world to come immortall, and glorious.

Rom. 8. 38.

3

Consolation to such as feare God that death will deliuer them from the hopes, and the liues of their sinfull enemies. Away must their soules goe, and downe must their carkasses, and where then are

are their purposes, and what becomes of their power? Though they were as mightie as Leviathan, and as mischieuous as dragons, yet when they bee dead, as die they must, what caule hath any man to be afraid of them? *Achab* minded great matters against *Micaiah*, at his returne in peace from *Remoth Gilead*; 1. King. 22. but God minded to preserue *Micaiah* by defeating *Achab* of a peaceable returne from thence. Let *Hezechiab*, and all his people, saith *Zanecherib*, trust to it, that I will speede them at my next comming to Ierusalem: but God had appointed that hee should come no more that way, but be drawne by the snowte like a fish, Isai. 36. 12. or led with a bridle like a beast to the shambles, and slaughter at and 37. 39. *Nimene*. The Egyptians were resolu'd to pursue Israel vntill they ouertooke them, and to put them to the sword when they caught them, and to take the spoile of their goods, when they had slaine them: but the waters were first to pursue themselves, and death to ouertake them, and the sea to haue the spoile of their bodies, and hell to make a pray of their soules.

Verse 8. *The iust escapeth out of trouble, and the wicked shall come in his stead.*

Gods fauour and goodnes doth not free his seruants from afflictions, but deliuereth them out of afflictions. Whereinto hee casteth the wicked, though they be not alwaies of the same kind with those which the godly suffer, but worse and more durable, and such as are mixed with Gods wrath, and poisoned with the sting of their owne euill conscience.

Though the afflictions of good men seeme sharpe, and grieu- Doct.ous, yet they are not perpetuall.

Before euer God bring his into troubles, hee appointeth how they shal be preserued in them, and passe thorough them, and get out of them. He doth as well foresee their arriual as their launching forth, and the end of the boysterous stormes which they must indure, as well as the beginning and entrance thereof. *Many,* Psal. 34. 19. or great are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord deliuereth him out of all. Neither number, nor grieuousnesse, nor continuance of crosses, nor power of persecutors, nor any other impediment

ment can hinder his hand from helping his distressed seruants.

Reasons.

First, they will keepe no silence when they bee in tribulation, they will cry vnto God, and bemoane their case vnto him, that hee may take their cause into his hands. Neither is it any waywardnesse in them, but wisdom, and their bounden duty so to doe: for he calleth them vnto him, and commaundeth them to make their complaint: *Call vpon me*, saith hee, *in the day of trouble; so will I deliuer thee, and thou shalt glorifie me*, Psal. 50. 15.

2 Secondly, all Gods people are petitioners for euery one, and euery one for all; so that no member of Iesus Christ wanteth friends to sollicite his cause, and to deale effectually for him.

3 Thirdly, the Lord himselfe beholdeth their teares, and sorowes, and sufferings, hee heareth their most secret sighes and groanes, his compassion is towards them, hee is able to helpe them, hee promiseth to deliuer them, and therefore from his owne commiseration and pitie, by his might and power, and in his trueth and fidelitie hee will surely drawe them out of miserie.

4 Lastlie, their life it selfe is not perpetuall, but short and of small continuance, and therefore how can it be that their troubles should be endles, or any way of long durance? It is an euerlasting trueth which the holy spirit publisheth in the Reuelation of Saint

Reuel. 14. 13. *John: Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord, for they rest from their labours*, that is, from all kinds of sorowes and sufferings.

Vse.

Reproofe of their follie which seeke to preuent troubles, or to shake them off by shunning the duties of righteousness. As though righteousness were not a sure friend to deliuer men, but a treacherous aduersarie to betray them. As though it were a matter of great perill to please God, and the onely way for safetie to prouoke him. As though the best meanes of defence were to disarm ones selfe, and to be weaponed and armed were to expose himselfe to the shot and strokes of his enimie. And yet this cowardlie heart, and erroneous mind is in very many, that they dare not addiect themselues strictly to euery seruice of pietie and iustice, lest they should cast themselues into snares, and troubles, and molestations. They are not perswaded by S. Peters testimonie, that no man can hurt them, if they follow that which is good, neither

1. Pet. 3. 13, 14

ther be they affected with his consolation, that blessed are they, if they suffer for righteousness sake.

Comfort to them that are tossed with the waues of troubles, and aduersities by persecutions, temptations, and necessities, if searching their hearts they can finde their vprightnes, and trying their waies they proue to be righteous; there is no cause why they should call in question the state of their soules, or thinke their present case to be irrecoverable. If multitude or greatnes of troubles were to make Gods fauour doubtfull, then few iust men should haue it certaine: for he hath allotted them to all his children, and made as due prouision for them of correction, as of foode: and he that is alwaies, and altogether without it, is not a sonne, but a bastard. If it were not an vsuall thing for good men to bee in afflictions, the scriptures would not so vsuallly speake of their comming out of afflictions. Let no man therefore say in prosperitie, I shall neuer be moued: so let no godlie man say in aduersitie, I shall neuer be restored. The Lord taketh as little pleasure to bee euermore afflicting his people, as a most tender-hearted parent doth to be alwaies beating his children. And as an indulgent father cannot indure to see violence offred to the shedding of his sonnes blood in his presence: so neither will our God permit the wicked to spoile and oppresse the godly continually in his sight. 2 Heb. 12. 8. Psal. 30. 6.

When the mercie of God beginneth to raise the godly out of afflictions, his iustice is readie to cast the wicked into miserie. The sinners are put into one scale of the weights, and the saints into the other. When the one riseth vp, the other sinketh downe: when the one commeth from troubles to prosperitie, the other goeth from prosperitie to troubles. This the Lord telleth wicked men before hand, and will not faile to fulfill it in due season. Behold, saith he, *my seruants shall eat, and ye shall be hungrie: behold, my seruants shall drinke, and yee shall be thirstie: behold, my seruants shall reioyce, and yee shall be ashamed: behold my seruants shall sing for ioy of heart, and yee shall crie for sorrow of heart, and shall howle for vexation of minde.* It seemeth to them an incredible paradoxe, and a newes by farre more admirable, then acceptable, that there should be such a transinuration of conditions on both sides, to Doct. 2. Isa. 65. 13. 14.

contraries; but he doth know that it will be so, and can effect that it shall be so, and hath decreed that it must be so, and therefore relateth the particulars with such certainty, as if forthwith the execution thereof should be presented to their senses.

Reasons.

1. Pet. 4. 17.

First, it is Gods ordinance, and the order which he vseth in his proceedings, that iudgement shall begin at his owne house, as S. *Peter* teacheth, and from thence be deriued to the wicked to continue vpon them for euer. The medicinable potion, at the brimme of the cup, he will haue his owne children to drinke for their health and preseruacion, but the dregges and poison at the bottome, his enemies must swallow vp for their ruine and destruction.

2 Secondly, troubles, feares, vexations, and torments are the proper portion of sinners, they receiue not their childes part, nor enter vpon their inheritance, till they fall into them. Good men passe through them, as a deepe mirie lane in a strange countrie, but trauell home to their owne pleasant soile of comfort; but the euill and rebellious gallop swiftly in the faire way of prosperitie, and hasten to their owne vncomfortable home of hidious desolation and horror.

3 Thirdly, their malitious behauiour against Christians doth with a strong hand draw themselues into miserie, and list the others out of it. The Egyptians made it their exercise to drowne the children of the Israelites, and God deliuering the Israelites made the Egyptians to be drowned. *Haman* cast about with all his wits, how he might bring *Mordecai* to the gallows, and the Lord appointed in his wisdome that the gallows should catch vp *Haman*. And so stood the case with *Daniels* enemies, they were driuen with their owne flesh and familie to feede the lions which they had appointed to eate vp *Daniel*. The Edomites were glad to see the Iewes drinke so bitter a draught of calamity, as the Babylonians by Gods righteous iudgement had mingled for them; and therefore the Lord would make the Edomites to pledge them in the same cup, and was more fauourable to the Iewes for their reioycing at them. For so hee speaketh to them both in the Lamentations: *Reioyce, and be glad O daughter Edome that dwellest in the land of Uz, the cup also shall passe through vnto thee:*

thee : thou shalt be drunken and vomit. Thy punishment is accomplished, O daughter Zion : hee will no more carrie thee into captiuitie.
Lam. 4. 21.

The doing of mischief to good men, the attempting of it, though they faile of their purposes, their wishing of it, though they dare not attempt it, and their reioycing at it when it is effected by others, all this doth assuredly bring mischief on sinfull mens owne heads.

Admonition to the aduersaries of the Church, and Christians, that they deale more milde and moderatelie with them. The case is their owne, they prepare for themselves whatsoever they impose vpon others. The burdens which they lay vpon their neighbours shoulders must be transferred to their owne backs : the bread of affliction which they prouide for their brethren, in time will turne to their owne foode : the little ease and dungeon wherein they shut vp the innocent, must in time be made their owne habitation.

Terror to vngodly persons in regard of their dangerous condition. Onely troubles they flie from, fearing them more then anie manner of sinne, and therefore account the life of afflicted Christians to be most miserable : and trouble is that which flieth as fast after them to make a pray of them, which also will make their state ten thousand times worse than any Christians can be. And if it so come to passe in this life, as many times it doth, that the godly are lifted vp to prosperitie, and the vngodly into grieuous aduersitie, what a change will there be, and contrarietie of their estates in the life to come. Which appeareth in the parable of the rich man, and *Lazarus*. Here the rich man receiued his pleasure and *Lazarus* paine : but there is *Lazarus* in heauen, and the rich man in hell : *Lazarus* is in *Abrahams* bosome, and the rich man in the flames of fire : *Lazarus* is comforted, and the rich man tormented. The best man in his best state here on earth, hath not a full enlargement, but onely inioyeth libertie of the prison : and the worst man in his worst state is not yet come to execution, but onely sitteth in the stockes. But the most perfect and absolute difference and change will be at the day of the Lord Iesus, when soule and bodie of the saints shall bee filled with glory and im-

mortalitie, and soule and bodie of sinfull creatures shall be overwhelmed with shame, and perpetuall contempt. And herewith the Apollle comforteth the poore persecuted Thessalonians; *It is a righteous thing with God, saith he, to recompence tribulation to them that trouble you, and to you which are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Iesus Christ shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mightie Angels. &c. 2. Thess. 1. 6. 7. 8. 9. 10.*

3

Consolation to poore helpelesse persons, if they bee also harmeles, that can find no friends which wil or can procure them deliuerance out of troubles. Few good are to bee found that take to heart the sufferings of poore innocents, and few of those that take them to heart, are able to preuaile any thing for them. But are there no wicked which may be heard of? Haue they no enemies which doe molest them? Alas, there be too many of these euery where, the world swarmeth with them. Then be of good comfort, you must come forth that they may come in, the place must be yeelded vp to the right owners. Cannot ye get a release freely? will not intreatie worke your libertie? A price then shall be giuen, a rancome shall be payd for it, and you shall be discharged. For such a promise we haue from God in this booke: *the wicked shall bee a rancome for the iust, and the transgressor for the righteous.*

Prou. 21. 13.

Verse 9. *A hypocrite with his mouth corrupteth his neighbour: but the righteous shall be deliuered by knowledge.*

Dissemblers, and such as make a shew of godlines, but denie the power thereof, are commonly most hurtfull seducers, corrupting mens hearts with hurtfull speeces, either deprauing that which is good, or iustifying that which is euill, and so they infect their mindes with erroneous opinions, and stirre vp their hearts to sinfull lusts, and peruert their waies with vngodly behauour. But now to preuent the feares of the good, that they also are like to be drawne into mischief, because there are so many hypocrites, and to take away the cloakes and shifts from the wicked, which lay all the blame of their sinnes on others which mislead them, he sheweth the meanes whereby this hurt may bee auoyded,

auoydd, and that is, by getting knowledge, and being righteous.

Vngodly men are neuer more mischieuous then when they
put on the vizard of godlines. Though this may be proued by
manifold testimonies, as well out of the old testament as the new,
yet we will rather exemplifie it by the experience of the times,
then by allegations of scriptures. Through all the bookes before
Christ, the false prophets are almost euery where complained of.
In the time of our Sauour, the Priests, Scribes, and Pharisees of all
others were his bitterest enemies. The Apostles found none so
dangerous as false Apostles and such as tooke vpon them to bee
professours and preachers. *Paul, Peter, Iude and Iohn* are most
ample in giuing admonitions to beware of them. Euer since that
time there haue been springs, streames, floods, and seas of super-
stition, idolatrie, violence, and all abomination in the kingdome
of Antichrist: and all vnder pretence of the Churches authority,
zeale, deuotion, and good intendment.

First, such are very forward and busie in this seruice of Sathan, *Reasons.*
(for diligent they are not to be esteemed, vnlesse they were better
exercised) and therefore the more hurt and mischiefe they doe.
That *Jeremy* obserued in the wicked deceiuers of his age, *that they* *Jerem. 9. 5.*
taught their tongues to speake lies, and tooke great paines to doe
wickedly. And that our Sauour reposed in the cursed Scribes
and Pharisees of his age, *that they compassed sea and land to make one* *Math. 23. 15.*
of their profession: and when hee was made, they made him twofold
more the child of hell then themselves.

Secondly, they are very deceitfull, and cunning : and therefore the scriptures compare them to craftie gamesters, and fowlers, which catch more birds artificially by lime-twigs, grinnes, and nettes, then they kill violently by throwing stones at them. Of these guilefull persons the Apostle speaketh, saying : *such false Apostles are deceitfull workers, and transform themselves into the Apostles of Christ. And no marueile: for Satan is transformed into an Angell of light. Therefore it is no great thing, though his ministers transform themselves, as though they were the ministers of righteousness.* 1. Cor. 11. 13.

They are the more venomous, by how much they are lesse
E 3 mistrusted:

mistrusted for the opinion that is had of them for pietie and goodnesse doth prepare a passage for their poison to enter into the bowels of mens soules. When they are reputed for godly, religious, wise, and iudicious, all is receiued which they set a-broach, all is disliked which they set against. It is an easie matter for a man to lose his purse, when hee followeth the robber as guide of his way. It is an easie matter for a man to lose his life, when he maketh a poysoner, and his enemie to be his Physicion.

Vse. 1.

Instruction to be very wary that their pestilent breath infect not our hearts to keepe our eares from hearkening to our perswasions, as much as we would refraine from one that had the plague sore vpon him. When Woolues will put on Sheepe skins, when thornes will take vpon them to be vines, when thistles will be figge trees, and euill workers haue the place of Prophets, then our Sauour admonisheth vs to looke to our selues, and take heede of them.

2

Secondly, consolation if wee corrupt not others with our tongues; but rather vse them to heale the corrupted, this declareth that we are neither openly wicked in behauiour, nor secretly hypocriticall in heart: for a holefome tongue is euermore a certaine note of an vpright conscience.

Doct. 2.

But the righteous, &c.] Though the tongue of the wicked be a deadly weapon to doe hurt: yet the knowledge of the godly is a defensiu armour to preserue him from it. The medicine which Saint Peter doth prescribe, with his cauear to auoide the delusions of subrill seducers, doth after a sort make a promise of remedie against them, to such as shall carefully receiue it. *Beware* (saith he) *least ye be plucked away with the error of the wicked, and fall from your owne stedfastnes. But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Sauour Iesus Christ, 2.Pet. 3. 17. 18.*

Reasons. 1.

First, Ignorance is that which giueth entertainment to errors, and all sound knowledge excludeth them out of dores. Whom doth the foolish woman, or folly her selfe call to her feast, but *such as are simple*? Whom doth she vter her minde vnto, but to *such as are destitute of vnderstanding*? And whom doe the lurking corner-creeperes so much pray vpon as *simple women laden with sinnes, and lead with diuers lusts*?

Prou. 9. 16.

Secondly,

2

Secondly, men of knowledge haue their wits exercised to discern betweene good and euill, betweene light and darkenes, betweene the seruants of God, and the workers of iniquitie. They beare the image of God, and therefore know the image of God where it is, and see the defects of it where it is not. They carrie a light within them whereby they are able to discouer the doctrines of falsehoode, which are contrarie to the trueth, and the workes of darkenes which are contrarie to holines, and therefore can reiect them both.

3

Thirdly, the sound knowledge of Christians is not onely a shield to warde off all detestable errors, and damnable heresies that they seduce not the mind, but also a preseruatiue to expell all flattering inticements, and sinfull suggestions that they corrupt not the heart. Aud that the holy Ghost doth expressly promise in this booke to euery one that doth loue, and labour for knowledge. *When wisdom entred into thine heart, and knowledge delighteth thy soule, then shall counsell preserue thee, and vnderstanding shall keepe thee, and deliuer thee from the euill way, and from the man that speaketh froward things, and from them that leaue the waies of righteousnesse, to walke in the waies of darkenesse: which reioyce in doing euill, and delight in the frowardnesse of the wicked, Prou. 2.*

10, 11, 12, 13, 14.

Encouragement to vse diligence by all good meanes, in all *Vse. 1.* Gods ordinances appoynted to that end to get vnderstanding and righteousness, since our neede thereof is so great, and the vse so good. Neither wealth, nor wit, nor any other thing can stand vs in so good steele for the preseruatiue of our hearts as these doe. For they all without those are treacherous and deceitfull, ready alwaies to betray vs, and open the doores to let in flatterie and corruption: but these haue faithfulness and courage, and power, and constancie, to stand for the defence of our soule to the end.

Though there should come neuer so many bands, and armies of Satanicall and hellish hypocrites, and euery mans mouth were a musket or cannon to send out most mortal, and deadly poyson, yet if we be armed with these graces, we neede not to feare them.

The Antichristian deceiuer cannot illude them that haue recei- *2. Thes. 2. 10.*
ued

Marth. 24. 24. ued the knowledge and loue of the truth. The false Christs shall not deceiue the elect, as being protected by Gods power, and furnished with holy vnderstanding. The diuell himselfe with all his fierie darts and temptations, shall be resisted and driuen backe by those that haue on the breast-plate of righteousness, and the other pieces of Gods complete armour. The Lord Iesus by the sound knowledge of the sacred Scriptures hath alreadie repulsed and turned him to flight, and putteth the same weapon into our hands, with strength and power to pursue him.

Ephes. 6.

3

Conuiction of them that are drawne away by euery iugler, and sinfull companion. The Iesuites, and Seminaries, the heretickes, and traytors, may disgorge their stomackes, and vomit vp their venome into their bosomes, and they haue neither hand, nor heart, nor tongue, to reiect them, but suffer themselues to be carried to errours, to heresies, to idolatrie, to conspiracies, to treasons, to rebellions, to shamefull executions, to fearefull damnation. Therefore they were not righteous, therefore they wanted knowledge, therefore they were naked and destitute of all defensue armour. And here come also to be taxed, as friends to corruption, all they that are enuious to vnderstanding, and the meanes thereof, which thinke it so much the more dangerous to seeke for, by how much there are more which goe about to deceiue. But this hath been sufficiently spoken of in the sixteenth verse of the ninth chapter, especially in the vs.

Verse 10. *In the prosperitie of the righteous the citie reioyceth, and when the wicked perish there is ioy.*

IN the prosperitie of the righteous] that is, when things goe well with the, the citie reioyceth, that is, the honest and well disposed citizens, and countrie men be inwardly glad, and outwardly declare their ioy, by cheerfull countenance, and speeches, and other meanes, as opportunitie serueth to expresse the same. And so doe they also at the death, and ouerthrow of oppressours, and tyrants, and other wicked persons, by whose fall the people rise, and whose ruine is the repaire of the citie.

Doff. 1.

Good men haue not onely Gods hand to giue them good things,

things, but godlie mens hearts to bee ioyfull for them. When *Mordecai* was aduanced the citie of *Sushan* reioyced, and was glad. And when the Lord shewed his great mercie on *Zacharie*, and *Elizabeth* in giuing them a sonne, their kinssolke and neighbours came and reioyced with them. Heft. 8. 15.
Luk. 1. 58.

First, the prouidence of God hath the disposing of all mens affections: he deriueth their loue, and their hatred, their liking, and loathing to euery one, as seemeth best to his owne wisedome. And he hath appointed by decree in his counsell: by precept in his word; and by working of his spirit that godly men shall bee well affected towards the godly, and Christians shall bee tender hearted one towards another. Reasons.

Secondly, they are all members of one bodie, and therefore a sympathy, and fellow feeling of one anothers state is mutually among them; *If one suffer, all suffer with it: if one member be had in honour, all the members reioyce with it.* 2 *1. Cor. 12. 26.*

Thirdlie, it is well knowne that righteous men will make their brethren commoners with them in their prosperitie. When they are aduanced, others shall not bee disgraced thereby but honoured: when they are enriched, others shall not bee impouerished thereby, but relieved: when they are made mightie, others shall not be weakned thereby, but supported. And so it is said concerning *Mordecai*, that when the royall apparell was on his backe, and the crowne of gold on his head, that vnto the Iewes was come light, and ioy, and gladnes, and honour. 3 *Heft. 8. 16.*

Now all this is contrarie in the state of harmefull persons, when God declareth his anger by casting them downe, the people publish their ioy by clapping their hands at them. At the least Gods seruants for Gods glorie, their owne peace, and the publike safetie, take comfort in this mercie that is shewed to the Church, in taking away such enemies. God inclineth their hearts to do this, and the crueltie of the enemy hath procured it, as the effects of both did manifest at the drowning of *Pharaoh*, and destruction of *Sisera*.

Instruction to them that bee desirous to possesse the hearts of honest men, that they gaine them by iustice, and vpright behaviour, by mercie, kindnes, and goodnes. This course will draw their Vjs. 1.

Hest. 10. 3.

their desires to wish well vnto them : this will put arguments into their mouthes to speake well for them : this will giue them encouragement to further their aduancement : this will make their promotion acceptable to them, and then desirous of the continuance and increase of the same. Now many men desire to be popular, but few to be righteous : it is easie to affect the greatnesse of *Mordecai*, who was second to the King, and great among his people, and accepted among the multitude of his brethren : but it is hard to follow his goodnes in procuring their wealth, and seeking their peace, and prosperitie. Good liking is not gotten by pompe and power, and fauour is not gained with wealth and riches, and loue is not commended by authoritie, and dignitie : these may be allured with goodnes, but neuer compelled by violence.

2

Dan. 6.

Reprooe of enuious persons, that maligne the good estate of godlie Christians: they reioyce not at their prosperitie like worthy Citizens, but gricue, and vex at it, like barbarous aliants: Either they labour to keepe them vnder that they shall not rise, or to vndermine them that they shall not stand, as appeareth in the example of *Daniels* aduersaries. But all is in vaine: they shall be frustrate of their purpose, they shall be foiled in their practise, they shall be shamed, and cursed, and plagued for their malicious hearts, and mischieuous enterprises. *They that hate Zion, shall all be ashamed and turned backward. They shall be as the grasse on the house tops, which withereth afore it commeth forth.* Psal. 129. 5. 6.

Deut. 2.

The citie reioyceth, &c.] Godly men are the chiefe inhabitants wheresoeuer they dwell.

They that reioyce at the prosperitie of the righteous, are called the citie, the place hath denomination from them : and it is certaine that neither all, nor the most, nor in many places the greatest are so wel affected, but contrary minded. So it is said in the booke of *Hester* that when the decree was gone forth, whereby all the Iewes were proscribed and destinated to death, that the citie of *Shushan* was in perplexitie. Who was this citie there, but the poore condemned Israelites, who from their first comming thither were but strangers and captiues? *Ahasuerus*, and *Haman* were not of the number : for they were merily drinking of wine ; and a great number both in the Court, and Citie, as it may appeare,

appeare, were glad of their miserie. So saith the Apostle to the *Rom. 1. 8.* Romanes, Your faith is published throughout the whole world, meaning thereby in all the Churches.

First, they haue a good estate in their goods, and hold their li- *Reasons. 1.* uings by a right tenure, through Iesus being inheritors of the earth: whereas none else are so much as tenants at will by any right or warrant from God, but meere vsurpers intruding themselves without any allowance into his possessions.

Secondly, all others are aliants in Gods account, and only their vnderlings and seruants. For so he speaketh of such as hold themselves to bee maisters and commaunders of many others: *The strangers shall stand and feede your sheepe, and the sonnes of strangers shall be your plo-v-men, and dressers of your vines: Isai. 61. 5.*

Consolation to them that haue the testimonie of the faithfull, *Vse.* and approbation of godly Christians in their behauiour. It is as good as if all the towne and countrie did commend them. And that was S. *Iohns* meaning when hee said that *Demetrius had a good report of all men.* *3. Ioh. vers. 12.* All wicked men would neuer speake well of him, or if they should, it had been little for his credit; but forasmuch as the Apostle testifieth of him, and the trueth it selfe also, it must needs be that those *all men* were all good men which knew his goodnes.

Terror for them that haue the complaint of Gods seruants against them. Though they be magnified of the multitude, and applauded of neuer so many wicked, they shall neither haue true honour, nor sound comfort thereby. The voices of Christians will carrie the cause, and their verdict is that which will cast the faultie, if they conuict, the Lord will condemne: for they neuer agree all to finde any guiltie, but where the word of God, and his spirit haue first giuen in euidence against them. It went hard with *Zanecherib* when God told him that *Zion* despised him, and laughed him to scorne, and shooke her head at him. But what cared he for that? Did not he despise her as much? True it is, that he despised her as much, but not with so much danger to her. His was a vaine, foolish, absurd, and contemptible contempt, like paper shot against a strong bulwarke: but hers was mightie, and effectuell carrying force with it, like a Cannon against a weake

cottage which will shake it to peeces in a moment.

Verse 11. *By the blessing of the righteous the citie is exalted: but it is subverted by the mouth of the wicked.*

THe meaning is, that iust men are very beneficial to the societies of men by their religious, prudent, and profitable speeches: for so the word *blessing* signifieth in many places: and so it is here meant as the antithesis sheweth; and so a poore man in aduersitie, may as well be an instrument of good to his countrie, as a rich man in prosperitie, as *Salomon* testifieth, Eccle. 9. 15. On the other side, the wicked with his mouth and hurtfull words, doth worke mischief among whom he conuerseth.

Doct.

By the blessing, &c. A godly man will alwaies do good to the place where he dwelleth, that many shall fare the better for him.

The land of Iudah found the truth of this by comfortable experience in the daies of their good Kings, and Prophets, as *Iehosaphat*, *Hezekias*, *Isaiab* and others, who obtained wonderfull deliuerances for their people at the hand of the Lord. The land of Israel found the truth of it in the daies of their holie Prophets *Eliab*, and *Elisba* who procured helpe against drowth, famine, and enemies, and therefore were called the chariots, and horsemen of Israel. What should I speake of *Ioseph*, of *Moses*, and *Samuel*, and *Dauid*, of *Nehemiah*, and *Ezra*, of *Hester*, and *Mordecai*, and many others, among whom *S. Paul* must be of the *Quorum*, as one of eminent note, specially for that marueilous preferuation of all that sailed in the shippe with him, notwithstanding they were very infidels.

Reasons.

First, hee will preferre the welfare of the publike state, before his owne priuate aduantage and profite. When *Moses* might haue continued a fauourite, hee voluntarily for his commoditie sake incurred the Kings displeasure: when he might haue been great in *Egypt*, hee rather forsooke *Egypt*: when hee might haue liued in credit, pleasure, and plentie like a prince, hee chose to liue obscurely, painfully, and hardly as a shepheard. When *Hester* was bid to aske, and haue to the halfe of an ample and large empire, she set aside all respect of lands and liuings, and onely craued the liues of her people.

Secondly,

Secondly, he will apply his tongue to all those meanes whereby hee may best effect his desire, and profit his neighbours: by prayers, by counsels, by exhortations, and encouragements, and specially by striving against the sinnes that are among them.

Gods blessing vpon him, doth make his blessing prosperous to others. For wicked men many times doe speede the better for the fauour of the Lord which doth accompanie his seruants. *Laban* knew, and acknowledged, that therein hee was much beholden to *Iacob*, not onely for his faithfulness and paines, but for the good effect and successe of them. *Iosephs* master, and *Iosephs* keeper, and *Pharaohs* house, and all the land of *Egypt* sped the better for the goodnes of God towards *Ioseph*. On the other side, in the sinfull person, euery thing is otherwise. His tongue and talke is hurtfull and noysome. Hee is wholly carried with selfe loue, and priuate lucre. All his endeouours be to accomplish his owne wicked purposes, and his meanes thereunto be vnlawfull and hurtfull. As hee by rebellion hath prouoked the wrath of God against himselfe, so is the curse sent out after him, and bringeth a iudgement many times vpon the place where he is, and the people that are about him, and the countrie wherein hee liueth.

Instruction to vse all kindnes to godly men, since we enioy so great a blessing by them. If they helpe to exalt the citie, let them be also exalted in the citie, or be well spoken of, or haue good affection borne vnto them: at the least beware that they be not iniuriously oppressed. The vnreasonable creatures which are commodious to the owners, will euery wiseman bee willing to haue, and carefull to keepe well. The insensible trees which bring forth plentie of good fruite, are husbandly dressed, and heedfullie preserued, that nothing doe baite the bodie, nor browse vpon the branches, nor breake downe the boughes. And shall not faithfull men be regarded, which doe more good in better manner, to greater numbers, for longer continuance? God forbid that we should be so vnthankfull, as to requite euill for good: or so improvident, as to hinder our good by requiting of euill? or so foolish and franticke as to ouerturne our former good, and change it wholly into euill and mischiefe. For that is the euent

that commonly ensueth vpon such as deale vnkindly with those who deale kindly with them. This caused *Jeremie* to turne his petitions, and accusations, and his intercessions into imprecations. *Shall enill be recompensed for good? for they haue digged a pit for my soule: Remember that I stood before thee to speake good for them, and to turne away thy wrath from them. Therefore deliuer vp their children to famine, and let them drop away by the force of the sword, &c.*

Jerem. 18. 20.

2

Reprehension of such as are spoilers of their cities, and not exalters; which ruinate townes, and cities, and countries, but erect nothing but their owne houses (habitations they are not properlie to be called, because they seldome dwell in them) and those they make sumptuous for pride and ostentation. Of such the Prophet speaketh when he saith, that *desolation and destruction are in their pathes*: they make haucke of all that commeth within their walke, and lay all waste before them. And here the Iesuits, and Seminars, and the whole crue of these vnnatural, barbarous, and cruell Papiists are to be condemned, which doe as greedily thirst after the blood of their King, and countrimen, and the subuersion of the kingdome and countrie, as any forraigne enemies in their greatest hostility are possibly able.

Isa. 59. 7.

Verse 2. *Hee that is destitute of wisdom despiseth his neighbour: but a man of vnderstanding will keepe silence.*

A Foolish man which hath a beggerly heart, as the words signifie, being voide of sound iudgement, and sanctified knowledge of Gods holy will, desireth to vilifie others, especially such as feare God, and to make them appeare base and contemptible. And this is done sometimes in bitter anger, by rayling, reuiling, and contumelious reproches; and sometimes in scurrill mirth, by girding iests, and laughter; and sometimes in hidden craft, by false reports and slaunders. But they which haue more wisdom, will frame themselues to better behauiour: they will not onelie keepe silence from offering that indignitie to them that prouoke them not thereunto, but will also forbear to requite them with reproaches, which haue not spared to seeke their disgrace. For so doth

doth *David* testifie of himself in this case: *I am as a man that heareth not, and as a dumbe man that openeth not his mouth.* Psal. 38. 13.

They which are the most contemptible persons, are the greatest contemners of others. As wisdom about all other things doth make a man to be excellent, so needes must the want of it make him to be base: and yet such as come not only too short of the perfection, but not at all to the beginning thereof, are readie to sport at them which are most graced with it. *When the wicked commeth, saith Salomon, then commeth contempt, and with the vile man, reproach.* None scoffed so much at *David* as the abjects, and the drunkards made songs of him. None mocked *Iob* so much as the vagabonds who were no better then their fathers, and their fathers not so good as dogges. *They were the children of fooles, and the children of villaines, which were more vile then the earth. And yet he was their song, and their talke, they spared not to spit in his face.* Iob 30. 18. 9. 10.

Prou. 18. 3.

Psal. 35. 15.

First, where wisdom is wanting, there pride aboundeth (as an emptie stomach is full of winde) and pride bringeth disdainfulness, because they conceiue of wonders in themselves, and discern of nothing but wants in others. The blinde bragging Pharisee was not ashamed to come into Gods owne presence, to depraue the humble poore Publicane, who was incomparably the better man.

Reasons.

Luk. 18. 9. 11.

Secondly, they are despisers of God himselfe, reiecting his counsell, and casting his word behind their backs, and therefore it is no strange thing that they should offer despite to mortal men.

2

Thirdly, contempt is in all equitie, their owne due portion, and God hath appointed in his iudgements, that they shall recouer their right to themselves, by making an offer.

3

Consutation of them which take it to be the fruit of their wisdom, and ripenes of their wit, to haue a dexterity in breaking of iests vpon men to make thē to be laughed at. So farre they think they shew the rarenes of their vnderstanding, as they can make men to feeble the keenenes of their tongues. But God which best knoweth who be wise, and what is wisdom, doth charge them to be vnwise, and void of wisdom. He to whom it belongeth

Vse. 1.

to conuince fooles, and to punish them, doth marshall these among the great fooles that shall be punished.

2

Intruccion as to keepe our selues from the Societie of such companions, vnlesse we be duely called into place; so not to bee dismaied, though in our callings, and for weldoing, they shoote their bolts at vs. Their strongest arrowes are but strawes, and their strongest archers are but dwarfs and Pigmees. The Lord himselfe doth animate vs against the greatest of them by the Prophet: *Feare yee not, saith he, the reproach of men, neither be yee afrade of their rebukes. For the wrath shall eate them up like a garment, and the worme shall eate them like wooll.* If a worme, and a maggot will proue stronger then they, and get the victorie of them, why should their words be more regarded then wormes, and maggots? Idcots, and naturals we care not for though they should raile vpon vs, and giue reuiling speeches: poore creatures they are to be pitied, they want wit, they know not what they say: and why then should these bee so much respected, which are to bee lamented for want of wisdom, and say they know not what?

Mal. 51. 7. 8.

Verse 13. *He that goeth about as a talebearer, discovereth a secret: but he that is of a faithfull heart, concealeth a matter.*

IN this place, and in the nineteenth of Leuiticus verse 16. and elswhere the holy Ghost compareth busi-bodies, and such as delight to deale in other mens matters, to petie chapmen, and pedlers, which carry wares about, selling in one place, and buying in another; and two markes of lewdnes he brandeth them with, as first, that they haue false and vnfaithfull hearts: and then that they haue loose and blabbing tongues that can keepe no counsell, but tell all that they heare. They will draw on men by their newes and reports to open their minds and secrets vnto them, which after they will publish to others. From both which vices hee cleareth all good men, their hearts are faithfull, and their tongues are silent to couer such matters as loue requireth them to hide, and durie and conscience do not bind them to lay open.

Doct.

A slaundersous tongue will be as readie to defame them whom it

speaketh vnto, as whom it speaketh against. It trafficketh altogether by exchange, it will deliuer nothing to you, but vpon condicion to receiue somewhat from you. It will neuer beare an emptie packe, but desireth where ought is vttered, and taken out, there to take somewhat to be put in, y it may haue choise for other places. This is the cause why the Lord forbiddeth to chaffer, or to haue any dealing at all with such manner of persons, though they make shew of neuer so great loue and kindnes towards vs. *Hee that goeth about as a slaunderer, discovereth secrets: therefore meddle not with him that flattereth with his lips, Prou. 20. 19.*

First, the same cause that moued him to relate others mens affaires to thee, will likewise induce him to discover thine to other men: and that is want of loue, a desire to be plausible in satisfying itching eares, and hypocritic, making resemblance to hate those faults which he censureth in others. *Reasons.*

Secondly they haue been trained vp in that trade, and therefore cannot leaue it, neither will they at any time neglect their markets for any mans sake. 2

Thirdly, they haue not the power, and gouernment of their owne tongues, but Sathan hath, whose gunpowder they are, and if he put fire vnto them, they cannot chuse, but take. And that Saint James meaneth when he saith, *that the tongue is set on fire on hell*, that is by the deuill that hellish spirit, Iam. 3. 6. Now hee is a continuall false accuser, and makebate betweene God and man, and man, and man, and friend and nearest friend, and therefore looke for no fauour at his hands. 3

Instruction: First, if wee would bee trusted, and haue men impart their minds vnto vs without suspicion of vs, let vs auoid the discourtes of other mens infirmities and labour rather to pray for them, and heale them. If we desire that any man should powre his counsels into our eares: let him not see one another mans dropping out of our mouthes; for then he may easily know what will become of his owne. 2. To be warie to whom wee commit our secrets: not to busie talkers, not to idle walkers, not to them that are hollow harted. If they be briars, and thornes, as *Micah* Micah 7. 5. calleth them, if they carry prickes in their mouthes, and guile in their soules, and sinne in their liues, trust them not, put not confidence

dence in them, keepe shut the doores of thy lippes from them, though they were friends, though they were counsellours, though they were yoke-fellows. Especially let vs not communicate with them in giuing them hearing of their vncharitable obrectations, nor trust them in our secrets: for it were iust and righteous that they should be disclosed and brought to light for a recompence of our rash and valouing credulitie.

Verse 14. *Where no counsell is, the people fall: but where many counsellours are, there is health.*

V *Here there is no counsell*] Where godly and holie instruction for guiding the heart and behauiour, and graue and prudent aduice for government of state, either domestically, or publike, doe faile, there *the people doe fall*, that is, the gouernours themselues, and they that are in subiection to them, doe runne into many mischiefes of grieuous disorders, and miserable destruction. For what in that case is to be expected from superiours, but violence and oppression? And what from inferiours, but falsehoode and disobedience? And what from all sorts, but impietie and wickednesse? And what then from God, but heauie strokes and punishments? *But where many counsellors are*, which be faithfull, and giue wise and wholesome counsell, and that is also imbraced and followed, there is health, that is, religion and iustice, peace, plentie, and safetie, with God gracious fauour and blessing.

Doct.

Nothing is more necessarie and profitable to any state then good counsell, where this is wanting, there the beaurie and brightnesse of authoritie is away. The multitude of men, the wealth of the people, the strength of munition, and the mightie force of armes will little auaille, if wise men be not employed in the weightie affaires. And this caused *Salomon* to make such comparisons, that lowly and submisse words of a poore wiseman, are more to be regarded, then the cite of an vnwise ruler, with his foolcs about him; and that wisdome is better then strength, and also then weapons of warre.

Eccle. 9. 17. 18

Reasons.

First, there is no more sufficiencie in any one man, by his owne wisdome without the assistance of others, well to order the mat-

ters

ters of a kingdome or ſtate, then for one alone to gouerne a great ſhip, without the helpe of other Sailers or officers. *David* profeſſeth of himſelfe that he was wiſer then his enemies, then his teachers, then the auncient, and yet hee ſought out the moſt prudent men in all *Iſraell*, as *Huſhai*, and *Achiophell*, &c. to helpe him with direſſion. Who euer, but *Chriſt*, ſince *Adams* fall, could ſay that he was as wiſe as *Salomon*? who hopeth to bee ſo wiſe? Who can be ſo wiſe, vntill the end of the world? and yet he made choiſe of a counſell to conſult with, and to confirme himſelfe, and his people by.

Pſal. 119. 98.
99.

Secondly, it is a mercie of God to a prince and people, to giue them many eyes to ſee with, many eares to heare with, many tongues to ſpeake with, many mindes to bee in continuall exerciſe for the benefit, ſafetie and preſeruatiō of the whole ſtate.

2

Thirdly, it is one of his great iudgements, either to take away counſellours from a nation, or to take away wiſedome from the counſellours. This was threatned to *Ieruſalem* and *Iudah* by *Iſaiab*, that the Lord of hoſts would deſtroye them of their ſtay, and ſtrength, the pillars of their countrey, and the props of their liues, and thoſe were not onely bread and drinke, and Warriours, and Iudges, but Prophets alſo, and the prudent, and the aged, and the counſellours, that ſo they might be eaſily caſt downe, yea ruined, and brought to duſt of their owne accord. And concerning the other branch, that it ſhould not bee taken for an ordinarie and gentle correction to his faithfull children, but a rare and ſeuere puniſhment to his diſſembling enemies, he doth aggricue it in another place, and ſet it forth in ſuch manner as might make it moſt fearefull to vs. Behold, ſaith hee, *I will doe a marueilous worke in this people, euen a marueilous worke, and a wonder: for the wiſedome of their wiſe men ſhall periſh, and the vnderſtanding of their prudent men ſhall be hid.* *Iſa.* 29. 14.

3

Iſai. 3. 1. 2.

Inſtruction that the care of our ſelues, the regard of our friends, the loue to our neighbours, our duetie to Prince and Countrey ſhould ſtirre vs vp to call vpon God, that as he hath counſell and wiſedome, and is wiſedome and vnderſtanding, ſo he would ſtore vs with able and learned Miniſters for the Church, and wiſe and prudent ſtates-men for the Common-weale: and that they

Uſe. 1.

which are so qualified, may haue their employment, and they which are so employed, may shew themselves faithfull, and they which are faithfull, may also bee prosperous. And so a lay man may bee a profitable Church man, and so a priuate person may doe good seruice to the King, and all his dominions.

2 Reproofe of such as trust to themselves, and their owne wisdom, and thinke they stand in neede of none. For their soules, they know as much as all the preachers can tell: for their behauiour, when to speake, and when to bee silent, what to say, and what to conceale; for actions to be performed, or forborne, they haue as much iudgement as any man: for their state, how to manage their affaires, and what course to take for their gaine, and commoditie, they wil learne of none of them all, &c. And this is a fault the more to be reprehended, when they contemptuously reject counsell which they may heare, when they despise the counsell of God which is offered vnto them, when like *Pharao* and *Achab* they make choise of such as shall illude and deceive them. For that is very vsuall and common with many purposely to affociat themselves, and harken to such as will quell in them the feare of all Gods admonitions, rebukes, and threatenings, and giue them encouragement to any idolatrie, superstition, impietie, wantonnesse, vnto bristines, worldlines, and all such euils as their hartes are most affected vnto. But most of all is their sinne notorious, which doe not onely refuse counsell themselves, but wish and desire that there were no counsellours to others, especially such as might informe them in the way of God to bring them to saluation. They complaine of the number of preachers, one is sufficient for a whole countrie: they exclaime of the frequencie of preaching, one sermon is enough for halfe a yeere. And of this sort the bloudie traiterous Papists are offendours in a high degree. They doe not onely wish fewer counsellours, and lesse store of preaching, but seeke by violence to effect it, as their practises declare. They would in a moment haue destroyed the King, and all his Cleargie, all his priuie Counsell, all his Iudges and Counsell learned in the Lawes, all the great Counsell of Nobilitie, and Commons assembled in Parliament: and afterwards all the godly Ministers and Christians throughout the whole kingdome.

Are

Are these the friends of the people? Doe they wish them to bee preferred from perishing? doe they desire and labour for the health of their nation?

Verse 15. *He that is suretie for a stranger shall wholly be broken: but he that hateth those that clap hands, is sure.*

HIs purpose here is to give men admonition to beware of suretiship: which he doth inferre by two reasons, first, from the hurt and danger which they runne into that be not well advised therein: and secondly, from the peace and safetie which they enjoy that heedelessly avoyd the perill thereof. Now he doth not absolutely condemne all suretiship (for then would *Paul* haue neuer vndertaken for *Onesimus*) but rashnes onely therein, is that which is here, and in other places reprooued. For it may sometimes be a worke of mercie to become surety, as well as to lende or giue. By *stranger*, is not meant all, or onely vnknowne persons. For it may fall out to be a durie of Christian loue, that way to helpe and relieue some such as we were neuer before acquainted with, and a neere neighbour, a familiar friend, a kinsman, a brother may in this case be a stranger to vs, when it is not safe to vndertake for him. As first, if there be like to grow detriment to the borrower, as taking mony, or any other commodities vpon hard conditions, and at vnreasonable rates, or for needelesse expences, and vnthriftines, or any way to the hurt of his state or conscience. Secondly, if it tend to the hurt and damage of the lender, that he is in danger to be defeated of his owne, and to sustaine losse by our meanes. If wee our selues are to bee intangled by it, the summe and valew of the debt beeing more then we are able either to pay, or well to spare: when ones owne creditours by that occasion, must be defrauded of their due, when our wiues, children, and families which haue also an interest in our substance, shall be robbed of their portion and maintenance, and bereaued of the fruit of their owne labours. Then hee sheweth a remedie against it, to hate such as clappe hands, that is, to hate and feare to be clappers of hands our selues, for the ratifying and confirmation of promises in this vnadvised suretiship, and so we shall be

Philem, ver. 18

safe and sure in this behalfe. Prouided yet, that we take not other courses that be coufen-germanes to it, & as dangerous and hurtfull as that is: as negligently without all care and regard to run into debts and arrerages, or ventrously without due consideration of mens faithfulness, and abilitie, to lend forth our monie, wares, or cattell, and so to put our state into the hands of strangers.

Doct.

Prou. 6. 1. 2.

A rash surety doth seldome liue in peace without trouble and miserie. Such a one, as though crosses were too few, and too slow, doth increase and hasten them to himselfe. He giueth his hand to his neighbour to put strength and weapons into his neighbours hands, to his owne woe and vexation. Hereof hath Salomon spoken alreadie in the sixt chapter: *My sonne, if thou be suretie for thy neighbour, and hast stricken hand with the stranger, thou art snared with the words of thy mouth: thou art euen taken with the words of thine owne mouth.* Before a man doth voluntarily insnare himselfe, he is like a bird that hath the libertie of the whole ayre, to flie whether sneed will at her pleasure, but after hee hath bound himselfe by promise and covenant, he is like a bird in a net, and in the fowlers hand, that may be killed, or caged, or giuen to children to play with, or otherwise dealt with according to the fowlers will, and yet the poore bird, is either surprised in her owne place, or allured by hope of foode to the baite, not knowing that she is in any perill, whereas the suretie doth wilfully cast himselfe into danger, being forewarned of the euent, that would follow, and hath no baite of any gaine, or benefite laide for him.

Reasons.

1

First, he cannot but liue in great feare, and distraction of mind, lest the party for whom hee hath vndertaken, should either faile of fidelitie, and purposely cast his debt vpon him, or else should come too short of abilitie, and prooue vnsufficient to discharge it himselfe. So if another be in want, then must he be in woe: If another be vnthristie, then he must be vnhappy: if another be false, then he must needes be brought to a fall.

2

Secondly, God doth offer by a prouidence whet the hearts of creditours, and sharpen them against sureties which fall into their hands. And that wee should not deceiue our selues in this case, with

with expectation of fauour, he telleth vs what is to be looked for, if we growe too bold and hardie. *Be not thou of them that touch the hand, nor among them that are surety for debts. If thou hast nothing to pay, why should he take thy bed from vnder thee?* Prou. 22. 27. Now this *why should*, is set downe by way of threatening, according as it is also in some other places of scriptures, as when *Amaziah* said to the Prophet, *haue they made thee the Kings counsellour?* 2. Chro. 25. 16. *cease thou: why should they smite thee?* And as hee giueth a caueat for euery one to take heede of entring into suretiship, or else not to thinke it strange if they feelee the smart of it, so hee granteth a warrant to creditors, to deale roundly with rash sureties, and not to be too sparing of them. *Take his garment*, saith hee, *that is suretie for a stranger, and a pledge of him for the stranger.*

Thirdly, the miserie which hee draweth vpon himselfe, when the burden of payment, and forfeiture shall light vpon his backe, will pearce his heart with bitter griefe and sorrow when his eyes shall behold the spoile of his goods, which either he hath gotten with labour and trauaile, or his friends haue given him in loue and kindnes, or his wife hath brought him in hope and expectation: when his eares shall heare the crie of his family and people that are frighted with terrors, and bitten with hunger, and staruen with cold, and pinched with all kinds of want and penurie. When his bones and whole bodie shall be restrained from his house and household, from vocation and calling, from friends, from recreations and comforts, from libertie and freedome, and clapt vp in a close and loathsome prison.

Reprooe of them that thinke it neither sinfull against God, nor hurtfull to themselves, but a point of good fellowship to yeeld to any mans request in such a matter. They take it to bee the easiest way to gratifie a friend, and least painful and chargeable to giue their word for him, yea and bloud also, if they be thereto required, as though the charges stood onely in bestowing their breath, and their paines, in putting their hand and seale to the obligation. And who are most forward this way, but such as haue least care to performe their promise? And whom doe they so readily vndertake for, as those that be shifters, and most vnable to keepe touch with their creditours? And as it falleth out in borrowing,

rowing, so it commeth to passe in bayling, that bad prisoners haue seldome better sureties, and men that be greatly offensive, most commonly offer their word for grieuous offendours. And many times they are caught, and brought into the trap, their deare friends of whom they had so good opinion, doe giue them the slip, and leaue them in the lurch, and then they clamour, and crie out, yet onelie against the vnfaithfulnesse of the man whom they beleueed so well, but not against their owne vnfaithfulnesse which would not beleuee God who forewarned them of the perill. Nay they still cleare themselues, though their owne follie conuiace them, they giue commendations of their owne course, though friends, and family, though Gods testimony, and their owne wofull experience condemne them. Their loue, they say, and friendship, their good nature, and kinde heart hath wrought them all that sorrow. Nay, rather it was crueltie, and vmercifulnes to your owne house. It was rashnes, a bad nature, and a foolish heart that brought you into all this miserie. Haue you desperately throwne your selues into a quicke sand, and will you lay all the blame vpon others for your sticking in the mire?

- 2 Defence of them which are not flexible to serue euery mans turne with bond and couenants, but will first know the person for whome they make their promise, and bee acquainted with his truth and honestie, and with his state and habilitie; and consider also of their owne sufficiencie, whether they can without any great difficultie, discharge that which they take vpon them, if their neighbour should faile. But this is want of good neighbourhood, say they. But this is a point of good wisdom, saith God, who neuer alloweth that neighbourhood for good, which swarueth from holy discretion. His commandement is: Thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe, and therefore no man is bound to loue him more then himselfe, especially when it is with hatred of himselfe, and hurt of many others. And in deede it is no worke of true loue, but of fleshly friendship: for loue doth neuer leade a man to doe any thing which God appointeth him to hate, as in this place he doth all rash suretiship.

Verse 16. *A gracious woman maintaineth her honour, as strong men keepe riches.*

A *Gracious woman* Which is indued with the feare of God, and the heavenly gifts of the holy Ghost, *doth maintaine*, that is, doth both get and hold a reuerend estimation and credit, *as strong men* be of abilitie to obtaine wealth, and riches, and to defend that which they haue.

They which haue grace shall neuer want honour, how meane *Doct.* and weake soeuer they be.

Euen women which are of the weaker sexe, euen poore women which neither haue parentage, nor beautie, nor rich apparell to set them forth, are yet reckoned among these honourable personages, if they haue vertue: for it is affirmed of euery one, without exception of any. *S. Peter* sheweth that there is no wise, nor woman of pure conuersation, whose heart is uncorrupt with a meeke and quiet spirit, but she is much set by of God, and become *Sarabs* daughter. 1. Pet. 3. 2. 4. 6. And if the Lord so well like of all holie women, he doth as much take pleasure in all holy men: if hee bee more delighted with their pietie and lowlines, then with gold and siluer, with pearles, and precious stones, and all costly apparell; then he will more esteeme also of the faith and loue, and other graces of these, then of lands, and liuings, and titles, and all manner of dignities. If they be transplanted into *Sarabs* kindred, and haue her for their mother; then these are incorporated into *Abrahams* stocke, and haue him for their father.

First, they haue the constant spirit of God constantly resting *Reasons.* vpon them, and that is a spirit of glory, as *Saint Peter* testifieth, 1. Peter 4. 14. As therefore that can neither be kept away, because Gods hand doth bestow it; nor any plucke it away, because Gods hand doth preserve it: no more can any stay them from receiuing praise and commendation, nor wrest it away from them, when they haue it. I

Secondly, as the excellencie of Christians doth not consist in bodily pompe, but in spirituall graces, and behauiour; so it is not so much apprehended with mens eyes, as with their hearts: their

2. Cor. 4. 2.

consciences will praise them, when their tongues reuile them, as the Apostle saith: *we approoue our selues to euery mans conscience in the sight of God.* He would not appeale to their lippes before men, but to their soules before the Lord, and then hee was sure they would iustifie him, though in speech many would condemne him. Now if it bee so, a womans grace will as well shine to their hearts, as a mans: a poore bodie as well as rich folkes: so long as they remaine godly, as well as when they began to be godlie, and more at the last then at the first, because their light groweth daily greater, and brighter.

3

Thirdly, it is true honour to haue the loue and liking of God and good men for vnfaigned godlines and goodnes; and this belongeth to all the faithfull though neuer so meane and feeble. They will hold first the feare of God in their hearts, that none can bereaue them of it: they will diligently doe the will of God in their liues, that none can hinder them from it, and then who shall forbid God to shew them the light of his countenance? and who shall alienate the hearts of Gods people from wishing them well with kind and hartie affection?

Eze. 1.

Reproose of many sinnefull women which seeke not honour by vertue, but vanitie, not by grace but garishnes. And that they maintaine with might and maine, with heart and hand, with teeth and tongue, and all the meanes which may be deuised. It is as easie to take a purse of golde from a strong armed souldier, as to perswade them to leaue their pride and idlenes, and other wicked wayes which they vsually walke in.

But besides these, there are other men and women to be reprehended, which are as vnconstant in any good course, as these are obstinate in euill. They haue entred into the way of godlines with good commendation in the beginning, and leaue off the race in the middest, and runne to sinfulness with the world in the later ende. They cowardly suffer themselues to bee overcome, and rifled, and robbed of their honour: their crowne is taken from them, their glorie is turned into shame and reproach, and causeth them to renounce that goodnes which before they seemed to imbrace: to forsake the fellowship of Christians with whom they were wont to conuerse: to neglect the duties of pietie which they

they were wont to exercise, to giue ouer the care of their families, which they were wont to instruct? Euen this that they would not be despised and brought to contempt: they would not be mocked and iested at for precisenes: they would not lose their credit, and good account. But is honour preferred by casting off grace? will this be a meanes to make them glorious, to shake off vertue, and shew themselves vicious? They viterly deceiue themselves: for our text saith, that they must bee gracious persons which shall be able to maintaine and keepe their honour.

Consolation for poore maligned and molested Christians, whose weakenes the power of the wicked seekes to play vpon: and whose meanes the pompous proude worldlings haue in derision, and stroue also to make contemptible to all others. The highest sinner in the world is vnable to hurt the lowest saint, or the most glorious among them, to shame the most feeble among these. It is as possible for a young childe by force to wring the weapons out of a giants hand, or take his monie out of his bosome, or to draw his heart bloud out of his body, as it is to strip any one good man of his reuerent estimation. And what meane they then to surmise that a few of them, and such as bee in disgrace with God, and all prudent men can bring downe, and cast to the ground the whole Church of God? Let them know that euery woman of Christ his armie, is too hard for any man, for all men, yea and for all the fiends that are in Sathans campe: Euerie child may bid defiance to him, and his whole host of persecutors. God is our defence, and therefore they cannot ouerthrow vs: God is our glorie, and accounteth vs for glorious, and therefore they cannot shame vs. In *Isaiah* this is often pressed, *Fear thou not, I am with thee, be not afraid, for I am thy God: I will strengthen thee, and helpe thee, and will sustaine thee with the right hand of my iustice.* Behold, all they that prouoke thee, shall bee ashamed and confounded: and they that stroue with thee shall perishe. *Fear not thou worne Iacob, and yee men of Israel: I will helpe thee, saith the Lord, and thy redeemer, the holy one of Israel. Thou wast precious in my sight, and thou wast honourable and I loued thee, &c.* *Isa. 41. 10. 11.*

14. and 43. 4.

1. For men that are trulie gracious and yet timerous, and full

of dread, lest Sathan should take aduantage by their imbecillity, and want of courage and learning to draw them to apostasie, and back-sliding. Consider that hee can keepe backe none from obtaining honour, whosoever either man or woman doth soundly endeavour to be godly, doth take a sure and infallible way to bee well thought of: none euer failed, or was disappointed of that successe. Remember also that when God hath once giuen it, the diuell can neuer take it away from any, but it remaineth to their liues end, and to the worlds end, and world without end: then be well assured that is vnable to depriue vs of grace, and constant faithfulness: for that is the spring from whence the other floweth: that is the bodie of the light, and the other but the beames which proceede from the brightnesse of it.

Verse 17. He that is a mercifull man rewardeth his owne soule: but he that is cruell troubleth his owne flesh.

By a *mercifull man*, is ment such a one, as with a tender and pitifull heart doth good both to the bodies and soules of men according to their neede, and his owne abilitie. And freely also remitteth wrongs, and passeth by offences without reuengement. Where it is said that *he rewardeth his owne soule*, the sense is, that he procureth to himselfe both soule and bodie a reward from God, and that as certaine, as large, and continuall, as if the fulnesse of power were in his owne hand, to bestow vpon himselfe as much happinesse for as long time as his heart could possiblie desire.

But he that is cruell] Which either in violence or rigour vseth to offer men hard measure, or shutteth vp his compassion from them that are in affliction, that he will no way releue or seeke to comfort, troubleth his owne *flesh*, that is, hurteeth his owne bodie, and in like manner his soule also.

Doct. 1.

Every mans dealing with others shall rebound to himselfe, whether it be in cruelty, or kindnes. Mercifull men shall receiue mercy from Gods owne hand, and from their brethren, whom he will stirre vp to shew loue and fauour vnto them: and those which are fierce and boisterous to others, shall not faile to be recompenced

ced in time: the Lord will be as seuerer as they are cruell, and as strict in iustice to them, as they are rigorous in extremitie to others. And this shall not alwaies be reserved to the last day, or to their death, or to the torments in the world to come, but spoilers be many times spoiled in this life, oppressors bee oppressed, and tyrants be ouerthrowne by tyrannie. And therefore our Sauiour giueth an admonition, that they which would not bee iudged, should not iudge: they which would not bee condemned, should not condemne: they which would be forgien, should be readie to forgieue: they which would haue giuen vnto them, should giue vnto others. *For with what measure yee mete, saith hee, shall men measure to you againe;* Luk. 6. 37. 38. To spare to speake of such arguments as may be gathered from the estate, and name of mercifull men, and the contrarie, because they follow hereafter in this chapter, and wee would not foretell our selues, we wil hold our selues to the words as they are literally set downe in the text, and make it appeare that euery mans owne soule receiueth most good by the goodnes which hee exerciseth towards others.

First, it is a forcible meanes for grace to be increased in him, and Gods ordinances to be blessed to him. Hee heareth the word of God delightfully, and it worketh effectually in him. No people were more ready to distribute to the reliefe of their brethren, then the poore Churches of Macedonia, and *Paul* had neuer greater effect and comfort of his ministerie then in the Macedonian Churches. So doe they pray with feruency and boldnes, and good hearts, then with mercie and sauiour. *Dauid* had incouragement to call vpon God for the preservation of his soule, when he could truly pleade that he was mercifull. *Cornelius* lost not his labour in praying, but found a comfortable and blessed successe when the Angell could tell him, that his almes came vp together with his prayers in remembrance before God. *Reasons. 1.*

Secondly, it maketh way for comfort in feares, temptations, and afflictions: it inuitheth godly men to repaire vnto vs, it maketh them desirous to refresh our hearts: it strengtheneth their hope in their supplications to God: it ministreth arguments for perswasion to our selues. Or if they should not come at vs, or

hope so well of vs, or deale so well with vs, yet our owne consciences with the testimony of Gods spirit would support our soules in greatest extremitie, as *Iob* did find by happie experience.

3

It is a treasure that is safely layed vp in heauen for our glorie, whereof much will be giuen vs when we shall be dissolued, and goe to Christ, but most of all, when we shall be restored, and Christ come to vs. At his glorious appearance, shall they appeare in glorie which haue been pitifull to his members, and fruitfull in mercie. They shall stand at his right hand, and to them shall he say, *Come ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdome which was prepared for you from the beginning of the world.* But all goeth crosse with carnall persons. The Lord giueth them no grace by his word and other ordinances, but challengeth them for coming into his house with bloodie hands. As he hath stopped his eares at the crie of the poore, so he shall crie himselfe and not bee heard. Misericordie will miserably torment him; his house is not a safe place for Christians to resort vnto; Lions dennes seldome fit for Lambes to be in: when good men be present, what can they say to mitigate his feares, or to lessen his sorrowes? If others be silent, will his owne conscience speake for him? Nay of all, that and the lawe of God will bee most forward and forcible to accuse and condemne him. And then at his death he commeth into the case of the rich man spoken of in the Gospell, that was tormented with flames: at the resurrection that sentence shall be pronounced vpon him, which was indited long agoe, *Depart from me ye cursed into euermlasting fire, which is prepared for the diuell and his angels,* *Matth. 25. 41.* All this, vnlesse he repent, is vndoubtedly belonging to him, besides the continuall perill of stroakes and iudgements to light vpon his bodie, which euery moment may iustly be feared.

Incouragement to goe cheerefully about the works of mercie, since they are so profitable to our selues. Some of them seeme to be very chargeable, and cannot be performed without expenses: yet we gaine more than we giue, we receiue more than we lay out, we doe good to other mens bodies, but make the best match for our owne soules. Others seeme very painefull and require both trauell and patience, and many be altogether vnpleasant to our

our

Iob 31.

Matth. 25. 34.

Isa. 1

Prou. 21. 13.

Luk. 16.

Vse. 1.

our nature: yet our wages doth counteruaile, and ouerpoise all our worke and labour: for we cannot put our bodies to so much royle and trouble in any seruice of Christian loue, as we shall obtaine to our hearts, delightfull pleasures with rest, and peace, and ioy and gladnes.

Consolation to them that are fearefull of themselves, and doubtfull of the state of their soules, they feele not themselves to belecue, they finde not the pearcing of godly sorrow, and therefore they call into question their faith and repentance. But are they mercifull men? Doe they beare a burthen with the afflicted members of Iesus Christ? They dare not say so directly, but their owne hearts tell them that they would mourne more with them, and doe more for them if they were able. Their desires then and willingnes exceede their abilitie, and what surer note can there be of true mercie?

Reuerendeth his owne soule, troubleth his owne flesh, &c. They are the best husbands which best provide for the good of their owne persons. To bee carried with carnall selfe-loue is a vice which is worthe to be condemned: to be lead with Christian loue of ones selfe, is a vertue which is much to be commended. The one draweth a man to wickednes, the other driueth him from it, to goodnesse: the one causeth him to be hurtfull to his neighbours, the other maketh him helpfull vnto them: the one seruing himselfe sinfully, doth vterly vndoe himselfe, the other applying himselfe to the seruice of God faithfully, doth procure his owne blessednes for euer. When the Apostle would bring an argument that should be perswasive and forcible, and most likely to preuaile with rich men to worke mercie and liberalitie in them, he chuseth this, *That they should lay vp for themselves a good foundation against the time to come, that they might obtaine eternall life.* It were to no purpose to lay vp onely for children, for heires, executors, or administrators, though they were sure to haue children, and friends, and their children, and friends were sure to inioy their possessions: but to enrich themselves, is truly to be rich; and to haue ones wealth personally in himselfe, and for himselfe, and not onely about him, is to be rich in deede.

First, the current or streame of all the promises, and threatenings,

Doct. 2.

1. Tim. 6. 19.

Reasons. 1.

things, runneth this way: the reward of all obedience, and the punishment of all iniquitie tendeth to this purpose. Blessings vpon goods and cattell, vpon grounds, and fruite trees, vpon children and familie, are but appendances to the substantiall blessings which are conferred vpon soule and bodie, especiallie for the eternall state of both. And so when curses fall on the outward things of wicked men, it is, that they may gather weight by the way to presse the heavier vpon their owne persons.

- 2 Secondly, though one haue neuer so great plentie of earthly things, and abundance of all kinde of prosperitie, yet if himselfe be not his owne, but destructions, what treasure can doe him good? *What doth it profit a man to winne the whole world, if he lose his owne soule?* Matth. 16. 26. So, though one haue neuer so great penurie of earthly things, and abundance of all kinde of afflictions, yet if he preserue his quicke stocke, that is, himselfe from being a spoyle to sinne and Satan, no creature can hurt him, his miserie will droppe off from him, his crosses and sorrowes will vanish away, and come to nothing.

Vse. I.

Instruction to be diligent in all those meanes whereby we may best benefit our selues, with commodities of greatest valew. As first, to labour for true pietie and religion: to be well acquainted with God, and his holy word: to receiue instruction, to haue it in estimation, to obey it in constant exercise. And heretof the holie Ghost speaketh in the ninth chapter, *If thou bee wise, thou shalt be wise to thy selfe, and if thou bee a scorner, thou alone shalt suffer.* Secondly, the performance of the dueties of mercie, is a gainesfull trade for the soule to thrive by: it bringeth in good store of comforts for present vse, and helpeth men to a stocke of ioy and happines for another day. And therefore our Sauour doth perswade vs to vse it, and giueth vs libertie to make our vse of it. *Sell that yee haue, saith he, and giue almes; make to your selues, bagges which waxe not old, a treasure that can neuer faile in heauen, where no theefe commeth, neither moth corrupteth;* Luk. 12. 33. It is dangerous, and sinfull to hoord vp much gold, and to keepe it too long; but safe and commendable to heape vp good workes in abundance, and neuer depart with them while the world standeth: they

they shall be sure to take no harme, and we shall bee sure to want no good.

Reprooffe of them that are frugall and thriftie, and neate, and husbandly for euery thing but for themselues. Their carable is dunded, and tilled, and sowne: their pastures are mounded, banked, and trenched: their trees are pruned, their gardens are weeded, their cattell are carefully looked vnto: and all this while they suffer their hearts to be ouergrowne with sinnes, as the wild wast is with weedes and briars: there is no fence to keepe the diuell out of their soules: they grow like nettles and brambles to be cut vp, and cast into the fire. Euery one of their horses, euery sheepe, euery cowe, euery swine and pig is in better case then themselues. They deale, as if they should trimme their haire, but wound their head: or be heedfull to their nailes, but let their fingers rot off: or keepe their garments whole, but permit their skin to be rent, and torne into peeces.

Verse 18. *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke: but hee that soweth righteousness, shall receiue a sure reward.*

THe wicked worketh a deceitfull worke] He is continually practising of some euill, which will neuer faile, to make his expectation to faile. *But he that soweth righteousness*, which constantly, and conscionably is exercised in doing good, *shall haue a sure reward*, partly in this life, with a competent measure of comfortable prosperitie, and perfectly in the life to come, with glorious immortalitie. The senie will bee the better discerned, if the opposition be set downe in this manner: The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke by sowing of iniquitie, and therefore shall bee deceived in his reward: but the godly worketh a faithfull worke by sowing of righteousness, and therefore shall receiue a sure reward.

Vngodly men shall bee sure to finde their sinnes more dangerous and hurtfull then they looked for. Their familiar friend whom they loue so deerely, and make so much of, which is most in their mouthes, in their hearts, and in all their waies, it will surely shew them a slipperie tricke at the last. Saint Paul can say

as much to this point, as any man, by the experience he had of it. Few had neerer acquaintance with it then hee at the beginning, and none had a greater breach with it in the ende then hee. And then he keepeth no counsell, but telleth all that hee found (and God auerretteth all that he telleth) *that sinne had deceived him, and slaine him.*

Rom. 7. 11.

Reasons. 1.

First, it putteth them in vaine hope to effect many exploitcs which they can neuer bring to passe, but at their indeuours recoile vpon themselves. How many stones did *Saul* cast vp to braine *David*? which all lighted on his owne pate. How small a matter did *Haman* thinke it to kill *Mordecai*? yea to destroy all the Iewes? which fell on his owne person, with his familie, and other friends. How sure were trayterous Papists, and vndoubtedly assured to blow vp the Parliament, and all estates of the kingdome? and yet of themselves diuers were blowne vp to the gallows, and all the rest, vlesse they repent, are likely to be blowne downe to hell.

Secondly, they dreame of a greater felicitie and happines in their sinfull courses, then euer they can attaine vnto. When *Abimelech* was aspiring to the kingdome, when hee was perswading the *Sichemites*, when hee was murdering his brethren, and making them out of the way, what did he once thinke of, but of cap, and knee, of honor, peace, & safetie? He had concluded that there would bee no molestation and trouble, no breach of covenant, and disloyaltie, at least no perill of life, especially by the hand of a woman: that all his authoritie should bee brought to such an ebbe, as onely to haue power remaining to commaund his page to runne him through with his sword. The fit and passion of dissemper that *Ahab* fell into when *Naboth* denied him his vineyard, declareth euidentlie how happie a man hee made reckoning to be when he should get it. And yet the occurrents which fell out at his taking of possession ouerturned all his happinesse. He intruded himselfe thereinto with iolity and mirth, but *Elijah* sent him out againe with heauinesse and griefe.

3

They presume of secrecie, that their shameful facts shall be hidden, and neuer brought to light, whereas they cannot possible be concealed. For God himselfe doth see and obserue them, and
who

who shall forbid him to reuile and discouer them? *Adam* was away when *Caine* slew his brother, and *Eue* was not there, and *Abel* was made sure enough for complaining, and *Caine* himselfe was silent enough from boasting of it, and no bodie else was in the fields, either to see *Caine* striking, or to heare *Abel* crying, and yet out it came, and knowne it is, and euery man can speake of it. *Gehezi* made not all the town of his counsell whe he followed *Naaman* for the monie, he asked not his maister leaue, to goe after him, nor made report of his dealing, and successe afterward; and yet *Elisha* could tell him, and hath declared to vs, and all others whither he went, and how hce speed, and what his intent was in the disposing of his monie, namely, to buy oliues, and vineyards, and sheepe, and oxen, and men-servants, and maid-servants, and to become a great man. What should wee speake of the plotting of *Ananias* and *Sapphira*, and of *Dauids* adultery, and murder, which were so closely contriued as they imagined, that neuer any man should haue had intelligence of them?

Fourthly, they haue taken securitie for impunity. Either they hope to escape all punishment, or else that it will be so light that they may easily beare it, or so short that they shall quickelie passe thorough it. Whereas the Law of God threatneth the contrarie, *That the Lord will make their plagues wonderfull, euen great plagues, and of long continuance, and sore diseases of long durance.* Deut. 28. 59. And if they will appeale from threatnings to promises, from the Law, to the Gospell, from *Moses*, to *Christ*, let them heare the sentence that *Christ* passeth vpon such inanner of persons: *They shall goe into hell, into the fire that neuer shall be quenched. Where their worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out.* Mark. 9. 44.

Fiftly, they haue conditioned and indented with sinne, before they entered into the grosse practise of it, that they would leaue it againe after a time, and so by repentance prevent both the shame and punishment. But they know not that all sinfulness is craftie, and cruell: when it hath them, it will hold them, and that fast by the heart, and keepe them in perpetuall bondage and thraldome.

They may with as good safetie drink vp strong poison, and prescribe it a measure how farre it shall worke: or cast themselues

into the raging sea with limitation how deepe they will sinke, and how long they will make their stay there. All the seruants of sin and Satan are chained vp in prison and not at libertie to depart at their owne wils: for the will it selfe is kept in hold, and neuer released, before the Lord with a forcible hand of grace doe deliuer it.

Vse. 1.

Instruction, not to suffer our selues to be abused by such a cousing companion. If a shitter should carrie about a pack of counterseite wares, it were a poynt of wisdom to refuse to buie of him, especially if they were infectious, and such as would indanger our houses with the pestilence. Now there is not vnder heauen any Conicatcher that liueth so much by his wit, as sinne and wickednes doth by wiles: which doth not defraude men of their money, but of their saluation; which bringeth not plagueie stuffe to kill the bodie onely, but most pernicious corruptions to destroy both soule and bodie for euer.

And such the workes of iniquitie be all so deceitfull, let vs hearken to the words of God, and the counsell of godly men, which we shall be sure to finde very faithfull. The perswasion of Satan seemed more plausible to *Eue*, than did the commandment of the Lord; but she had escaped the venome and poison of Satans perswasion, if she would haue giuen heed to the Lords commandment.

Pro. 5. 12. 13.

The note of wilfull vnchast persons in their miserie, will be the song of all other sinners that refuse to receiue admonition: *How haue I hated instruction, and mine heart despised correction! and haue not obeyed the voice of them that taught me, nor inclined mine eare to them that instructed me! Within a little space I am in all euill in the midst of the congregation and assemblie.*

2

Reproofe of them that vndertake the defence of subtil sinne, that offer themselues to be compurgatours for her; if she say that she is honest and vpright, they will sweare, they thinke it true. What euill is there, of Idolatrie, superstition, swearing; Sabbath-breaking, crueltie, wantonnes, yea abominable whoredome, pride and riot, but it shall haue proctors to pleade for it, and giue countenance to it? And most commonly they are the men, that of all others euery way for soule and bodie, for substance and credit, haue

haue been most plagued by her. Her craftines hath so enchanted them, that by her vsage she hath gotten their harts for euer. Their wits, their tongues, their pennes, their practise of life, and all shall be altogether for her against God and his word, against all godly men, against all ciuill men, against their owne estimation and state, comfort and saluation.

God is a sure paimaster to all that labour faithfully in his seruice. Though their strength bee not great, nor their worke very much, yet if their desires be sound, and their endeouours vpright, their recompence will also bee certaine. The Prophet *Azariah* knew that he spake as well to posteritie as to those of his owne age, and as truly to Gods people as to King *Asa* and his people: *Be strong, and let not your hands be faint: for your worke shall haue a reward.* Doct. 2. 2. Chro. 15. 17.

First, the couenant is plaine and without all doubtfulness: there is no equiuocation in it, there is no mentall reseruatiō to peruert the meaning of it. Reasons. I.

Secondly, the couenant maker is absolutely perfect, and euery way all sufficient. His wisdom foreseeth what things are fit to promise: his truth doth binde him to doe all that is promised: his mercie doth moue him to doe more than he promiseth: and his power doth serue him to performe whatsoeuer his wisdom seeth meete, his truth hath vndertaken, or his mercie willeth vnto his seruants.

Instigation to shew all diligence in doing good, and let no time slip away without some fruitfull exercise. Of men some hire their workfolks by the yeere, some by the half yeere, some by the moneth, some by the week, and some by the day: but God giueth vs wages for euery minutes worke, for euery moments worke, for euery gracious speech, for euery holy thought, for imployment in our beds, for patience in our sicknes, for good vsage of recreations: there is no season, no state, nor place, wherein a good man may not be well occupied, for the increase of his wages. The same reason doth *S. Paul* vse to incite the *Corinthians*, and all other godly Christians, to bee very laborious and painfull in all good seruices continually, seeing there will be a resurrection, and a retribution to euery man according to their waies. *Therefore my beloved.* Vse. I.

1. Cor. 15. 58. *beloned brethren (saith he) be ye stedfast, vnmoueable, abundant alway in the worke of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vaine in the Lord.*

2 In encouragement to patience, though we seeme not to haue present pay for our obedience. Our wages is in a sure hand, and will not faile to be yeilded vnto vs when our neede requireth it, or any vse may bee made of it, for our best aduantage. Our wages is better than ordinarie; the whole crop that we sow is giuen vs for our labour, and therefore let vs not be too hastie to reape it before it bee readie. Good Farmers, indeede, pay the ploughmen sooner than the corne is ripe, but cheaper thā the corne is worth: whereas God bestoweth freely vpon his labourers all that they haue sowed, it is their owne, and therefore let them tarric till haruest, and they shall finde their hire will farre surmount their trauels. This is the ground of the Apostles perswasion to the Galatians: *Let vs not bewearie of well doing: for in due season we shall reape, if we faint not.*

Gal. 6. 9.

Verse 19. *So righteousnesse leadeth to life, and he that followeth euill seeketh his owne death.*

THis verse is inferred vpon the former, by way of explication, to shew what he meant by the deceiueable worke of the wicked, and the sure wages of the righteous. And first he beginneth with the latter according to the manner of the Hebrewes, declaring that life, vnderstanding thereby immortalie and all the blessednes annexed vnto it, is that sure reward which all godly men may vndoubtedly expect: and destruction both of soule and bodie eternally, is the ende whereunto the deceitfull worke will bring wicked men, which do so much deceiue themselues by a greedie desire of satisfying their sinfull lusts.

Doct. 1.

The Lord hath not onely appointed a certaine reward, but a precious for his seruants. Nothing can be better then such a happy life, and such a happy life as he deemeth nothing to good for them to enioy. Hereof the Apostle speaketh to the Romans: *The wages of sinne is death, but the gift of God is euermlasting life through Iesus Christ.* Rom. 6. 23.

This

This is to set forth the bountie and superabundant munificence *Reasons. 2.*
of God the father, that the riches of his loue and goodnes, may be
magnified aboue all creatures. Hee putteth into the hearts, and
power of sinfull men, to giue gold and siluer, to giue iewels and
treasure, to giue lands and liuings, to giue titles and dignities, to
giue crownes and kingdoms; but neither men nor Angels could
euer giue life to any, or keepe their owne by their owne power:
the liuing Lord, and eternall God, is he that maketh all his Saints,
as well in heauen, as in earth to liue eternally.

Secondly the Lord Iesus our Sauour hath by his dying killed
death, and bought life, and by his resurrection triumphed ouer
death, and won life for euery one of his members: yea he himselve
is the life of his people which beleue in him, who maketh them
partakers, by an euerlasting communion with him, of his owne
life. He layd it downe for them, and tooke it vp againe for them,
and imparts it vnto them: it is as possible for him to perish, as
them, and the whole Deirie as him.

Thirdly, the seed of grace whereby the sonnes of God are re-
generate is an immortall seede, as S. Peter calleth it, and of the
nature of the father that begetteth them, and therefore they must
needes receiue life, and retaine life, and neuer after bee depriued
of it.

Fourthly, without this life the children of God were in no bet-
ter case then other creatures. For either they should bee subiect
to eternall death, which is the condition of the wicked reprobats,
or else be extinct and abolished with a finall dissolution, which is
the state of vnreasonable beasts.

Instruction to labour for righteousness, and preciously to ac-
count of it, since it procureth so precious a reward to vs, and that
from the fauour and kindnesse of our gracious God. Hee that
strueth earnestly herein may truely be said to worke for life. For
life is proposed, and life he seeketh, and life he shall finde. If great
wages were vncertaine, or certaine wages were but small, it would
be but a small encouragemēt to take great paines; but seeing now
it is so sure, and so large, and so good, what is too much to be per-
formed, and what is too grievous to bee indured for the same?
True it is that righteousness will call for trauell, and raise vp
trouble,

Rom. 18.

2. Cor. 4. 17.

trouble, but it is as true that all the trauels and afflictions of this present life, are not worthie of the glorie, which shall be shewed vnto vs. For our light affliction which is but for a moment causeth vnto vs a farre more excellent, and an eternall weight of glory.

Gen. 19. 16.

If nothing but bare life were bestowed vpon vs, euen meere deliuerance from the danger of death, it were a benefite not lightly to be esteemed. It was said of *Lot*, that he was preserued from destruction of Sodome, the Lord being mercifull vnto him; and yet his goods, money, and cattell which hee had in great abundance, were all destroyed. And the diuell spake the truth though in craft and malice, concerning *Iob*: skinn for skinn, and all that euer a man hath will he giue for his life. But when life is full of liuely comforts, when it is adorned with endles glory, when it is enriched with infinit treasures, what crosses, what pouertie, what temptations, what reproaches, what persecutions, and sufferings should diminish our desire of it, or make vs remisse in seeking for it?

2

Reproofe of them that care not whose seruice they come into, nor what worke they doe, so that they may haue nothing to doe with God and his seruices. They thinke no prison more streight, then the Church: no drudgery more grieuous then prayer, and hearing of sermons, singing of Psalmes, and sanctifying of the Sabbath: no bondage so burdenous as restraint from sinfull delights, and fleshly pleasures: no miserie so bitter as sound Christianitie. They distaste with great detestation, all persons and actions, and gestures, and words that fauour of godlinesse, or haue any stampe and print of pietie in them; and as themselves abhorre all his worship, so they labour to discourage all others from doing him any seruice. These are they which are continually censuring of professours and deriding their precisenes, and insulting ouer their pouertie and meane estate. As though the Lord were not able to maintaine them that serue him, or else did grudge to bestow good things vpon them: as though he were a niggardly hard maister vnwilling to allow his people sufficiencie of food and wages. That were a great disloyaltie so to traduce a liberall Lord and free harted Prince who is readie to promote his seruants to liuing, though it bee but for a time.

time: but it is an execrable impietie so to blasphemie the most bountifull God, who giueth to euery one of his, both liuing and life, and all blessednes for euerimore. But many of them say that they speake by experience, themselues haue been professors, and as forward as the best, and they neuer got any good by it. And such *Malachy* bringeth in quarrelling against God: *Your words,* saith he, *haue been stout against mee, yet yee say, what haue wee spoken against thee? Yee haue said it is in vaine to serue God: and what profit is it that wee haue kept his commandement, and walked humbly before the Lord of hosts?* Mal. 3. 13. 14. Who is so busie to complaine for want of wages, as they which neuer performed any good worke? let not the exceptions of murmuring apostataes preuaile in the eares or harts of any that haue vnderstanding. They were neuer of the family of God, though they crept into his house: they neuer did one good chare in obedience, and for what then should they haue their recompence? They were alwaies proud hypocrites though they boast of humilitie, and why should they be vsed as humble persons? But be it that they pleade for others who haue faithfully kept the commandements of God, and truely been humbled in his sight, and yet labour in a low estate and meane condition. Is there no profit in seruing of the Lord, vales there be present preferment and earthly promotion? Our principall pay will bee in life, whereof wee haue part in hand by grace in our soules in this world, and the rest is behind vntill the pay day in the world to come. So that a sinner cannot discern of the happinesse of a Christian, nor conceiue how God dealeth with him. For the comfort of the heart is a thing vnkowne to him, and the glorious life is hid with Christ in God, and shall not fully be seene before we appeare with him in glory.

Col. 3. 3. 4.

Doct. 2.

But he that followeth | The more violent wicked men are in their sinnes, the more neere they draw to destruction. When they course euill as the grayhound doth the Hare, and hunt for it, as the hungry lion, or other wild beast doth after his pray (for thence is the similitude taken) then they will ouertake their death anon, and come speedily to damnation. As the miserie of the *Aegyptians* approached neere vnto them, so their crueltie increased towards the *Isracelites*. And they were neuer more fiercely disposed

to kill and to slay, than when the waters were presently to doe execution vpon them. Warre was concluded without any great consultation; a mightie hoste was gathered, without any busines of mustering; they were all in a readines to fight, without any further training. So stood the case with the Sodomites, they were all set on mischief and madnes immediatly before they were destroyed. And so it fared with *Abab*, who tooke his farewell toward his voyage and death, with contempt of the word of God, and persecution of his Prophet. And so we might note *Belsazzar*, and *Haman*, and many others for this purpose, whom the Lord cut off in the very practise of some notable mischief.

Reasons. 1. First, this earnest pursuite of sinne with loue and liking of sin, proceedeth from an heart hardened with custome of sinning, being past remorse and feeling, and this will bring men to worke all kinde of wickednesse euen with greedinesse. And this is a forerunner of Gods iudgements.

2 Secondly, this following of euill is also accompanied with impudencie, and shamelesnesse: as their hearts cannot feare before God, so their faces cannot blush before men. And what state these men stand in, the Prophet *Jeremy* sheweth: *Were they ashamed when they had committed abomination? nay they were not ashamed, neither could they haue any shame: therefore shall they fall among the slaine: when I shall visite them they shall be cast down, saith the Lord.*

3 Thirdly, this manner of sinning crieth in the eares of the Lord, as it is said of the Sodomites, and prouoketh him to anger, and therefore will draw downe a speedie punishment vpon them.

Vse. 1. Instruction, if we loue our selues, our life and saluation, that we flie from euill, and follow it not: for it will follow vs too fast. We shall goe no whither whiles wee carrie this sinfull flesh about vs, but it will be at our heeles, yea in our hands, and heads and harts, and whole soule and bodie. Euen the best may say as *Paul* did, *I finde that when I would doe good, euill is present with me.*

Rom. 7. 21. But much more is it present when we are not so well disposed, though indeede it be not then so easily destroyed: and therefore since it will intrude it selfe vpon vs against our willes, let not vs play

play the parts of the wicked, to take Satans place and become tempters of our selues.

Terror for the workers of iniquitie, which bestow great paines to doe themselues great hurt, which will not bee stopped from the seruice of sinne, and therefore cannot be staied from the punishment thereof. What doe they else but fall into phranticke passion of desperate persons, which seeke all opportunities to murder themselues? They make euery delight and pleasure a corde to strangle themselues with: euery lust a knife to cut their owne throates: euery commoditie a well to leape into: their meate and drinke to be a poyson to their soules, and hurtfull to their bodies by surfeiting and drunkenness, and such like abuses.

Verse 20. *They that are of a froward heart are abomination to the Lord: but they that are upright in their way, are his delight.*

B*y froward in heart*, he meaneth not onely such as are inclined to anger and bitternesse, which are of a crabbed, sowre and churlish disposition; but all that are wilfull in any sinfull course, though with neuer so great mirth and laughter. Yea many times excessive pleasure, and sporting, and merriment, with good fellowship, as men account it, is the very subiect of their frowardnes, and that which they so obstinately stand in. And though they pretend reason for their doing, and seeme smoothly to defend it, without peruerfenes, yet the heart being seetled in resolution of it owne purpose, the Lord taketh notice of it, and therefore abhorreth them for the present, and will make his iudgements to manifest his detestation of them hereafter. *But they that are upright in their way* and heart, (as the other are froward in heart and behaviour) are greatly beloued of God now, & shall more fully see, and feele, and enioy the comfort and happinesse of his fauour in time to come.

Whosouer is giuen to frowardnes, is wholly voide of vprightnes. A sincere hearted Christian may through infirmitie, fall into a fit of frowardnes for a time, as *Asa* did, when he cast the Prophet into prison, for reproving his sinne: but to haue the habite of it to be froward, is opposed as contrarie to being vpright. So

Doct. 1.

were the qualities one set against another in the third verse of this chapter: *The uprightnes of the iust shall guide them: but the frowardnes of the transgressors shall destroy them.* So are the persons contrarily dealt with as contraries by the testimonie of Dauid: *With the upright man thou wilt shew thy selfe upright: with the pure thou wilt shew thy selfe pure; and with the froward thou wilt set thy selfe to wrestle.* Psal. 18. 25. 26.

Reasons. 1.

First, the vpright man hath a respect to all the Commandements of God, with desire and endeuour to keepe them, as Dauid professeth of himselfe: *All his lawes were before me, and I did not cast away his commandements from me. So was I vpright with him, and haue kept me from my wickednesse,* Psal. 18. 22. 23. Whereas the froward person doth either reiect the whole law of God, or else retaineth, yea maintaineth at least some one sinne wittingly, because he may know, and willingly, because hee refuseth to obey, against some one commandement.

2 Secondly, they which are vpright doe ground their actions and waies vpon arguments and reasons, and therefore they strue to haue them as plaine and sound as may be: and they which are froward doe ground their reasons and arguments vpon their waies and actions, and therefore they labour to haue them as craftie and subtill as may be.

3 Thirdly, they which are vpright will desire to haue the truth reuiled to them, and yeeld to it when it appeareth, and loue them the better that shall informe them in it. And they which are froward will desire to haue the truth suppressed, and contend against it though it bee manifest, and like them the worse that shall shew it vnto them.

Use.

Instruction, not to giue too much credit to froward men, nor too large a testimonie of them. If wee see that they will not bee brought to a Christian conuersation without, we may know also that they haue an vnchristian conscience within: for their heart is neuer better than they are willing their waies should bee. And why then should we esteeme them to be men of plaine meaning, when God himselfe telleth vs that there is no plaine meaning in them? Why should we praise them whom he doth discommend? why should we cleere them whom he conuinceth? why should we
iustifie

iustifie them whom he condemneth? And yet it is a fault, though much against pietie, that carrieth a great colour and glosse of loue and charitie. He is a very honest man (say they) but yet giuen to gaming too much, no man can dissuade him from it. It is his only fault (saith another) that he is a great swearer, and cannot be brought to leaue it. He is a right good man (saith a third) and euery way deserueth praise, sauing that hee is no bodie at Church: he cannot abide those sermons, and Preachers: say all what they can, he is still at defiance with them all: and so they, as much as in them is, stand for them that go about to trauesse their inditement against the Lord and all his faithfull Ministers.

The loue of God is not according to that which men haue of outward things, but to that which they are in hart and behaviour. Many froward men are great in the world, and yet are all gentlie abhorred of him: and most vpright men are of the meaner sort, and yet nothing the lesse in his fauour. And this is *Davids* meaning when he saith, *The Lord will trie the righteous, but the wicked and him that loneth iniquitie doth his soule hate.* The righteous are his gold, and therefore he will refine them vntill they bee perfectly purged from al dross: yet he loneth them as well in the fornice as in the treasure: but as for the vngodly, howsoeuer hee seeme to spare them, yet he doth not like them: and though the might of his hand bee not yet vpon them, yet the hatred of his heart is strongly against them. *Doct. 2.*

The righteous stand before him in the meries and glorious righteoulesse of Iesus Christ: he is his welbeloued sonne, and in him he is well pleased with all his members: and the froward and wicked stand in their owne impure and filthie nature, hearts, words and actions. *Reasons. 1. Math. 3. 17.*

Secondly, the righteous are his owne obedient sonnes that do faithfully serue him: and the froward are his rebellious enemies that fight continually against him. *2*

Thirdly, he cannot looke on the righteous, but he must behold the gracious worke of his owne hands in their new birth and second creation: but in the froward he seeth the work of the diuell, whereby they are depraued and made most vile and ouglesome. *3*

Instruction, that wee conforme our selues to the example of *Vs. Ro.*

God in this behalfe; if froward persons bee abomination to him, let them not be in estimation with vs: if he loath them, as we doe snakes, and toads, and all kind of serpents, let vs not loue them as delectable things, wherein men reioyce and take pleasure: but let vile men be vile in our eyes, and let such as feare the Lord bee regarded of vs. Far bee it from vs that we should grace and countenance those whom God doth proclaime to be odious and abominable: that we should associat our selues and bee found companions with those whose sight is offensive vnto him, that wee should receiue them into our seruice which refuse to enter into Gods: and God reiecteth the as altogether vnfit for his family. But well is it with our soules, whē we can truly say with the Prophet, *All my delight is in the Saints, and in them which are excellent. Mine eyes shall be to the faithfull in the Land, that they may dwell with mee: he that walketh in a perfit way, he shall serue me.*

Psal. 16. 3.
Psal. 101. 6.

2

Terror for those obstinate wicked persons which trust that by stiffe standing to their tacklings they shall grow into credit and good account with the world, as indeed their successe is very oftē answerable to their expectation. But what gaine they by getting mans fauour and Gods displeasure? when basenes and follie did smile vpon them for a moment, and glorie and wisdom doe frowne on them for euer? It was the case of the Scribes and Pharises, they iustified themselves before men, all did praise them; but though they were so highly esteemed among men, yet they were abomination in the sight of God: our Sauour told them so in their prime and full blossome, but they little thought it to be true. But what is become of al their salutations and titles, and praises now? hath not the Lord sent a blast vpon them, and caused their glory to wither away? is not all their excellencie turned into contempt, and their names made a by-word of reproach in all Churches?

Luk. 16. 15.

3

Consolation to vpright hearted men, how poore soeuer they be, & how basely soeuer the world thinketh of them, it is enough for them that the Lord taketh pleasure in them. Whē *Abasuerus* had but once graced *Mordecai*, al the citie quickly took notice of it, & he was presently great, notwithstanding he was a captiue and a condemned man, and of a nation that was euery where despised: and

and was there more force in the fauour of a mortall man to make him honorable whom he bare no great affection vnto, than there is in the loue of God being so tender and large to his owne children? what then though they should bee dealt with, as *S. Iames* speaketh, that in respect of gold rings and goodly apparell, which rich men present haue on, they should bee put vnder the foote-stoole, or thrust out at doores? yet let them know y^e God hath chosen them to bee rich in faith, and heires of the kingdome, which he hath promised to them that loue him. What though they should not onely be dispised, but maligned of them that be stronger than themselves? yet let them not bee discouraged at their power that are against them, but comforted in his good prouidence that is for them. If this be true that they bee Gods delight, then this will be also as true, that God will be their defense. *Ahab* was an heauie friend to *Micaiah*, and professed his hatred towards him, and threatned mischief to him: and yet Gods fauour preuailed more for his safetie, than *Ahabs* displeasure could doe for his hurt. Iam. 2. 3. 5. 2. Chron. 18.

Verse 21. Though hand ioyne in hand, the wicked shall not be punished, but the seede of the righteous shall escape.

THough vngodly men haue many friends, and such as bee mightie: though they ioyne all their forces together to aide and defend one another, or all of them one, yet they shall not bee able to minister any helpe or succour when the Lord taketh them in hand to plague them. On the other side, though righteous men seeme to be in great perill, and haue fewer friends, and those also poore and feeble, yet they shall get out and be deliuered, and not onely so, but their children and posteritie also shall be preferred: So that whereas many strong wicked men cannot deliuer one, one weake godly man shall deliuer many.

Vngodly men are nothing the better for all the friends they haue: their plotting together and combination is of no force at all for their preservation, but rather for their ruine. The Lord by the Prophet *Isaiah* doth deridingly challenge, and after a sort dare the enemies of the Church to attempt any thing against his people. Doct. 1.

Isai. 8. 9.

people vpon their perill: *Gather together on beapes O ye people, and ye shall be broken in peeces: gird your selues, and ye shall be broken in peeces: take counsell together, yet it shall be brought to nought: pronounce a decree, yet it shall not stand.* As if he should haue said: Make your selues as strong as ye can, with multitude, leagues, armour, consultations, authoritie, and by what meanes ye can, and as oft as ye will; yet all shall doe your selues no good, and nothing shall doe my seruants harme. When the Canaanites and other inhabitants of that land were to be punished, how many Kings with their people banded themselues together against *Ioshua* and the Israelites? and yet it was to no purpose: they did but offer themselues to the sword: that stood *Ioshua* in good steede; for it would haue been long before hee could haue found them out, and slaine them singly man by man.

Reasons. 1

First, this association and confederacie doth not breake off Gods resolution, either by pacifying his anger, or daunting his courage: it rather incenseth him to greater displeasure, because they will stand at defiance with him, and offer to make head against him. And that more encourageth him (as wee may speake to the capacitie of men) to take the opportunitie of their insolencie, and puissant assistance, because their ouerthrow will be so much the more for his glorie.

2 Secondly, it is impossible for them, be they neuer so many, to diminish his power and make him the weaker. When al Sodome and the other cities by it were vngodly and wicked, hee could as easily destroy them with fire and brimstone, as though they had been but a few. When the whole world was giuen ouer to sinfulness and rebellion, he could as easily destroy it with raine and water, as if it had been but one man.

3 Thirdly, they cannot thereby increase their owne power, to make themselues able to incounter with him, and so to auoide his stroakes by resistance: for strength and might consists not in the multitude of men, but is limited by Gods hand, who onely hath the bestowing of it, because it is his owne; and to whomsoever he giueth it, from the same he can at his pleasure take it, when it is abused by them. Were it not so, the diuell and all his hoste about him would trie what they could doe, before they would

would be cast into that miserable and desperate torment at the last day. There was neuer so great an armie, as that will be of reprobate men and angels, and if any thing would make them to strue, it would be the damnable estate whereunto they shall bee adiudged then presently to enter: but they shall sensibly see and feele it to be bootlesse, and therefore they will neuer attempt any such matter.

Instruction to vse better meanes to be freed from punishment, *Vse. 1.*
and that is to take heede before how we fall into sinne. So did *Iob* provide for his impunitie, by preserving his eyes, his heart and his hands from lust and lewdnes, from violence and crueltie, from Idolatrie and couetousnesse, and all such misbehaviour, as might prouoke Gods wrath against him. And if that be past, wee haue done such things already: runne not from God to friends for to saue vs: let vs not seeke the helpe of their hands, vnlesse it be to be lifted vp with ours in prayer, but runne to God by faith and holy humiliation. No other course wil secure vs from iudgements deserued; neither the multitude of friends, nor the meanes they can make, nor their tender affection towards vs, will preuaile to succour vs, if we fall into the hands of the liuing God. *Haman* in all mens iudgement was sutely backt, and so were *Balaams* prophets, and yet committing sinnes of death, they receiued the sentence of death, and felt the execution of death in the presence of those whom they most depended vpon. *Iob. 31.*

Admonition to beware how wee take vpon vs the defense of sinful men to keepe the from such correction as is due vnto them; for we lose our labour if wee seeke to stay them from all punishment: many by escaping the parents rodde doe come vnder the Magistrates whip, and many by escaping the whip doe come to the gallows, and many by escaping the gallows doe fall into damnation: for they are deprived of those medicines which might haue wrought a cure in their soules. And what doe wee in this case but withstand the discipline of God himselfe? How would the Magistrate take it if the offenders whom he is to punish should be pluckt away and rescued out of his hands? do not they which make such attempts bring themselues into the compasse of the same faults which the malefactors were to suffer for? whatsoeuer

the others were condemned for, these haue now made themselves accessarie vnto, whether it be felonie or treason or any other grievous offence: and yet it is a thing little feared of men: they which haue neither mercie nor courage to deale in the cause of a poore oppressed innocent are readie and bold to protect and maintaine those, which are impious and sinfull and walke in such lewde and wicked waies as are offensive and abominable to God and man. How many are kept from their condigne punishment by the countenance of great mens cloath and seruice? How many doe words and letters preuaile for? how many are cleered by corrupt Iurors, who lay the guiltines of many soule and fearefull faults vpon their owne consciences?

Doff. 2.

But the seede of the righteous, &c. The best way for any man to doe his children good, is to bee godly himselfe. Hee that setteth himself to serue God, & to seek euerlasting saluation, is busily occupied in prouiding for his posteritie: & that which his soule shall find to bee most comfortable to him, his seed shall find to be most profitable to them. The same spirit of trueth which here doth as-

Prou. 20. 7.

He that walketh in his uprightness is iust, and blessed shall his children be, after him. He needed not to say that he himselfe is blessed, though he knew it to bee so, and so likewise meant it: for true iustice is euer ioyned with true blessednes: but to prooue the fulnes of his owne happie estate, he sheweth that it shall flow ouer also to his children. So is it said in the

Psal. 112. 1. 2.

Psalmes both concerning himselfe and his: Blessed is the man that feareth the Lord, and delighteth greatly in his commaundments: his seede shall be mightie vpon the earth: the generation of the righteous shall be blessed.

Reasons. 1.

First he himselfe is become the sonne of God, and so his are Gods sonnes children, and then consider the abundant loue euen of earthly parents to the seede of their sonnes and daughters: *Manasse* and *Ephraim* were as deere to *Iacob* as if he had been their immediate parent, and so were *Ephraims* and *Manasses* children to *Ioseph*: though *Naomi* was but mother in law to *Ruth*, yet how acceptable was *Obed* the sonne of *Ruth* vnto her? though *Moses* was but the adopted sonne of *Pharaohs* daughter,

Gen. 48.

though

though of another nation, though of such a nation whom they held as bondservants, though of a people that was an abomination to him and his people, though such a people as he feared and sought to destroy; yet *Pharaoh* loved him and preferred him, and shewed all kindnes to him for his daughters sake, when she had taken him to be hers.

Secondly, a Christian parent is most fit and competent to deal with his children to bee serviceable to God: and to deal with God to be mercifull to his children: great is the force of a fatherly admonition, when a godly father admonisheth: and marvellous is the efficacie of a parentlike blessing, when a holy parent doth blesse the fruite of his bodie. So much doth *Jacob* intimate to *Ioseph* for his exceeding great comfort: *The blessings of thy father shall be mightie with the blessings of my elders: unto the end of the hills of the world, they shall be on the head of Ioseph.* That prophane *Esau*, as wicked as hee was, did assure himselfe that he should be the better for his father *Isaacs* blessing, if he could obtaine it, and therefore wept for sorrow when he went without it.

Thirdly, the children of religious and faithfull parents are intituled to the promises and blessings of God both for soule and bodie, as appeareth in the holy records, by that argument *S. Peter* perswaded them to beleeve, whose hearts were pricked at his doctrine: *To you is the promise made (saith he) and to your children, and to all that are a farre off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call.* And by the like reason the seruants of the Lord who giue themselves to pietie and mercie, are comforted notwithstanding their great afflictions, and the flourishing state of the wicked: *The righteous is ever mercifull and lendeth, and his seede enioyeth the blessing.*

A reproofe of their follie and soule impietie that are so farre deuoted vnto their children, and carried with such a desire of their aduancement, that they cast off all deuotion towards God, and neglect the good care of their owne saluation. They feare not to cast themselves deepe into hell, so that they may raise vp their name and their houses high vpon earth. And for this cause they giue ouer themselves to miserable niggardlines and pinching, to burdenous vexations and trauels, to shamefull iniustice and falsehood.

hood, to violent oppression and cruelty. They haue a good pennyworth, as they thinke, and buy very cheap, when they can gaine worldly wealth by losse of their heauenly happinesse: when they can purchase liuinges to their posteritie, by passing away the life of their soules. But hearken a little ye lillie wretched creatures: O foolish men when will you begin to learne wisdome? your thriving is waitfulness; your rising is falling; in purchasing you forfeite; in semblance of loue you practise hatred; in seeking to set vp your seede by such vnlawfull courses, you take the way to pluck them down, and vtterly to vndo them for euer. No man but *Ieroboam* could euer haue wrought so much mischief to *Ieroboams* familie: and *Ahab* and *Iezabel* were most mortall enemies of their race and lineage: and *Nebuchadnezzar* prouided woe and miserie to his issue that was yet vnborne when he died. And by what meanes did all these persons bring all this hurt vpon their feede? by relinquishing religion and the true seruice of God: by exercising tyraunie against the seruants of God, and greedie getting of goods to make themselves and their children great: that which in taunting manner is charged vpon one of them, is euery way verified vpon euery one of them: *Ho, he that conueterth an euill conetonsnes to his house, that he may set his nest on hie, to escape fro the power of euill. Thou hast consulted shame to thine owne house, by destroying many people, and hast sinned against thine owne soule.*

Mat. 2. 9. 10.

2

Consolation to religious parents whether they bee rich or poore: whether their children be dead or liuing, whether the liuing be godly or sinfull: If they haue wealth, they may hope it shall be for the vse of their sonnes or daughters: if not, that the al-sufficient God will prouide for them sufficiently without their helpe or substance. If they be dead, they haue great encouragement to comfort themselves in the perswasion of their saluation. If they liue, though wee should die and depart hence, yea and leaue them in afflictions and distresses, yet this comfort we haue, that as the mercie of God to our selues was not assured vnto vs for tearme of life, but eternally for euermore: no more is his goodnes to ours to cease with our life, or bee determined at our death. Poore lame *Mephibosheth* had a father liuing, yea an euerliuing father that appointed him to be well prouided for, and maintained

maintained, when good *Jonathan* that begot him was slaine and gone. The godly poore Prophet that left his wife so far in debt, that neither she was able to satisfie it, nor the creditor willing to bee satisfied, without taking of her sonnes to bee his bondmen; yet had taken order before his death for the payment of debt, for libertie of sonnes, for maintenance of familie, namely by possessing the constant fauour of God, which both conueyed him to heaven, and remained with his household here in earth. If they should be wicked, yet the Lord hath grace enough and power enough to make them good. It is without trouble or charge to himselfe, or hurt to his creatures, and why should they not then both earnestly pray for it, and constantly waite for it? what if it be not wrought at first? yet it may bee effected at the last: and so long as they haue a naturall life, so long may their friends hope for their euclasting life. *Jacobs* sonnes were not all godly the first yeere, nor in many yeeres, and yet not without goodnes in their latter yeeres. And so stood the case with *Manasse* the sonne of *Ezekiah*, and many other holie Christians. 2. King 4.

To godly children of religious parents, who besides the state they haue in the promises of God in regard of their owne faithfulness, haue also a portion therein by right of their progenitors, and so they haue a double portion, and may warrantably take double comfort, if withall they can yeeld to God his double praises. 3

It was a strong and mightie prayer that *Jacob* made and full of assurance of hearing, and happie successe, when hee remembred that the Lord was the God of his father *Abraham*, and the God of his father *Isaac*, and had promised to doe him good, and formerly performed, it and would yet be more mercifull to him and his seede after him: it is not a trifle or matter of small consequence to bee able truly to pleade before God ones owne faith and integrity, and the pietie or godlines of their father or mother, or others of their ancestors. Gen. 32. 9. 10. 12.

Verse 22. *As a iewel of gold in a swines snout: so is a faire woman that lacketh discretion.*

A Sa ring of gold, or any other ornament, doth not adorne, but misbecome a swine, no more do:h beautie, stature, strength, wit, apparell, wealth, or any other externall thing bring true praise, or commendation either to man, or woman which wanteth true wisdome, or vnderstanding.

Doct. 1.

Swines snout, &c. God maketh no more reckoning of sinfull people without vnderstanding, then of brute beasts without reason. Though they haue humane nature, and carrie the forme and shape of men and women with best shew, yet if there bee nothing in them but that which is humane, euen flesh and bloud and sinfulness, no beautie, nor brauerie, no personall excellencie, or artificiall additaments, make the best of them, is more acceptable to him, than is the basest of all the other creatures. It is a very homely comparison wherewith the holy Ghost disgraceth wicked men in this booke, and yet so true, that hee auoucheth it againe in the new testament: *The dog is returned to his owne vomit, and the sow that was washed, to the wallowing in the mire, Prou. 26.*

Isai. 11. 6.

II. 2. Pet. 2. 22. And as in these places for impuritie they are likened to filthie beasts: so in others, for hurtfulness they are resembled to fierce and venomous beasts, as Leopards, Lions, Wolues, Beares, Dragons, Aspes, Adders, Vipers, and Cockatrices.

Reasons. I.

First, all those creatures, for their parts, haue ever since the beginning of the world stood and continued in the state wherein they were first made, & that depriuation which is in the nature of any of them, proceeded not from themselves, but from the fall of man, which hath not only deformed himselfe, but disordered euerie thing about him: and the cause why they haue not knowledge and vnderstanding, is, that they are not capable of it: but wicked men are wholly degenerated from their originall excellencie, and haue defaced the image of God in their owne soules. They haue lost their iustice, and fallen to vnrightheousnesse: they are depriued of holines, and become prophane: all sound vnderstanding

standing is gone, and nothing is in them but ignorance of Gods holie will, and of the myſteries of ſaluation. And therefore *Jeremy* ſaith, that every man is a beaſt by his owne knowledge. And *Jerem. 17.* *Zophar* in the booke of *Iob* proceedeth further and ſheweth what kind of beaſt he is moſt like. *Vaine men*; ſaith hee, *would bee wiſe,* *Iob 11. 12.* *though man borne* (that is, in his owne eſtate not regenerate) *is like a wild aſſe colt.*

Secondly every dumbe creature according to his kinde, perſormeth the will of God without any reſiſtance: Whereas wleked men rebellouſlie doe thriue againſt their maker, and contemptuouſly tranſgreſſe his commaundements.

Thirdly, the vile eſtate, and miſerable condition of graceleſſe men, how great ſoever, doth make it appeare that the Lord preferreth them not before contemptible beaſts, becauſe at the leaſt their end will be as bad as the worſt of theirs. And this doth God himſelfe declare in the *Pſalmes*: *Like ſheepe they lye in the graine,* *Pſal. 49. 14. 20* *death deuoureth them.* Man is in honour, and *underſtanderh not*: *he is like to beaſts that periſh.* They lie in their graues as the carcaſes of rotten ſheepe in a ditch, and death maketh a pray both of their ſoules and bodies, as crows, and kites, and rauens, and dogs do feede ypon carrions.

Inſtruction not to ſatiſſie our ſelues in this, that hauing ſpeech, and reaſon, we go beyond all fiſhes, birds, beaſts, and all creeping things, vneleſſe alſo by grace and ſpirituall gifts, we goe beyond all voregenerate men.

To acknowledge with thankfulneſſe the great fauour and goodnes of God towards vs, when hee hath transformed vs into the ſhape of Chriſtians, and the Image of his owne ſonne, that we may be acceptable to him.

Neither beaurie, nor other outward gifts doe any good to the owners that are deſtitute of wiſedome. All ornaments can neuer make a ſoole to be comely, no more then a ſilken coate can make an Ape to be manly, or a ſweete bath can make a blacke Moore beautifull. If wiſedome be wanting, we may truly ſay with *Sa- lomom*: *Vanitie of vanities, and all is vanitie.* *Doct. 2.*

Fiſt, the perſon of one man commendeth all outward things, *Reaſons. 3* and onely grace and wiſedome make his perſon commendable.

And

Eccl. 8. 1.

And in this sense it is said in the booke of Ecclesiastes, that it is the wisdom of a man that doth make his face to shine. Nothing but sound vnderstanding and holy behauiour can possibly make either man or woman to be estimable, and worthie to bee looked on. It is as truly to bee affirmed of one sexe as another, and no lesse of one state than of another, that fauour is deceit, and beautie is vanitie: but a woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised.

Prou. 31.

2

Secondly, through want of wisdom, the good gifts of God be defaced (as the swine would not spare to bring the iewel with her into a filthie puddle, or to wallow with it in the most loathsome mire) and so they are the lesse esteemed in better men, which are worthily adorned with them.

3

Thirdly, in this case they peruert them vsually to the hurt of others: as beautie is made a snare to entangle mens eyes and affections: wealth and power bee weapons of oppression: wit and policie be nets for fraude and deceit: fine speech and elocution be calles to allure men to the hurt of their soules and estates. And the same is verified of many things which Salomon speaketh of one: As a thorne standing vp in the hand of drunkards: so is a parable in the mouth of fooles. A drunken companion with a thorne, or goade in his hand, doth sometimes prick and pierce himselfe, and sometimes hurt them that bee neere about him: and so standeth the case with sinners that can speake wittily, and yet want a sober heart to guide their tongues christianly: they wound their owne soules, and depraue good causes, and set a colour vpon sinne, and much traduce the names of many blamelesse persons.

Prou. 26. 9.

4

Fourthly, themselves of all others are in most perill, and like to receiue the greatest hurt by these meanes. Pride hath a doore set open to it for free access to the heart, where there is any externall excellencie without internall sanctitie: And Shame hath a way prepared for it to follow after, when they haue great things for many mens eyes to looke vpon, and little discretion to vie and manage them. Nothing is more behouefull for a foole than to be obscure in the darke, that his follie shame him not in the light. How much better had it been for Absalom, Achitophel, Adonijah, Ieroboam, and Achab, with others of like state and behauiour,

hauour, if they had been deformed in bodie, and weake in capacite, and meane in condition, than to haue been so conspicuous, and of such grett note, and now to be so contemptible, and of such great infamie?

Instruction, that substance wisdom and grace do giue honour, *vs. 1.* and life, and good effect to all the inferiour gifts of God which are but temporarie, and not euertlasting, that therefore before all the rest wee should most labour for wisdom and grace. If other things be already bestowed vpon vs, seeke to obtaine and increase these heavenly ornaments, to giue a lustre to the naturall gifts wherewith the Lord hath qualified vs, and to season our outward possessions to our vse and comfort. *Wisdom*, saith Salomon, *is good with an inheritance, and excellent to them which see the Sunne.* His meaning is not that wisdom is good to them onely that haue inheritances, but that it is good, yea necessarie for them which haue inheritances to get wisdom that will make their possessions good, and that will help them to the good vse of their possessions. And so wisdom is good with strength; wisdom is good with wit, wisdom is good with gentrie, wisdom is good with dignitie, and wisdom is good with beautie. It doubleth the greatnes and value of euery good blessing that God bestoweth. *Dauids* victories and power bee renowned by wisdom: *Salomons* glorious kingdome is made memorable by wisdom: and so is the prosperitie of *Iob*, and *Abraham*: and so is the aduancement of *Ioseph* and *Daniel*; and so is the beautie of *Hester*, and *Sara*.

Ecc. 7. 13.

Reprooffe of them that bee afraide of nothing so much as of *vs.* grace and heavenly wisdom, because it will crosse their pride and sensuall lusts. It will forbid the nice dames that make idols of their owne bodies to bestow so much time in tricking vp themselves, with pranking and painting: and therefore they haue no more desire to receiue godlinesse, than to depart with beautie. They are as willing that the small pockes should deforme their faire faces, as the word of God should informe and cleanse their foule consciences.

Verse 23. *The desire of the righteous is only good, but the hope of the wicked is indignation.*

WE must beware here that we iustifie not al the wishes and desires to be good, which righteous men conceiue, nor condemne all to be vnrighteous which conceiue any wishes and desires that be not good: for then should *Dauid* be excluded out of the number of the righteous, or else his desire of hauing *Bathsheba*, or wishing to know the number of the people should be allowed. But he vnderstandeth the maine streame of their desires, the course and current of their hearts is to godlinesse and goodnesse, though sometimes they corrupt nature in themselues, and the tempestuous temptations of *Satan* doe violently driue their thoughts another way; which is wholly contrarie in the wicked. For they desire nothing but mischiese and euill, and therefore in the end they shall receiue nothing but miserie and punishment, which will be so great and so grievous, as will make them raue and rage with madnes and furie, especially because they looked for a better state. Thus then standeth the opposition: the desire of the righteous is onely good, and therefore their hope shall end in consolation: but the desire of the wicked is onely euill, and therefore their hope shall end in indignation.

Doff.

Godly men are most desirous to please God, and God doth as graciouslie accept of their desires in the best manner. They are not willing to allow a thought in themselues that should not be lawfull, and he is not willing to looke vpon, or speake of their vnlawfull thoughts. Though diuers things be many times amisse in their minds, and in their mouthes, and in their deedes, yet there is faithfulness, and therefore he passeth by their faults. So he testifieth of *Dauid*, that he kept his commaundements, and followed him with all his heart, and did onely that which was right in his eyes.

1. King. 14. 8.

And so he testifieth of all the godly *Israelites* in the booke of *Numb. 23. 21.* Numbers: *He seeth none iniquitie in Iacob, nor any transgression in Israel.* And so he testifieth of all vpright hearted people whom-
soeuer

foeuer in the Psalmes: Surely they worke none iniquitie, but walke in his waies. *Psal. 119. 3.*

First, he imputeth that to euery man, and counteth it his, which proceedeth from the predominant power in him. In the regenerate nothing is theirs but their fruite, and nothing is their fruite, but the worke of the spirit. And so though the vnregenerate doe many good things, yet nothing is theirs but their fruite, and nothing is their fruit, but that which groweth from the flesh. *Reasons. 1.*

Secondly, he seeth the force and violence of originall corruption, how it assaulteth them, how it woundeth them, how it taketh them captiues against their willes, and therefore rather pitieth them, than acculeth them. And hence it is that *S. Paul* by good warrant, for example to all other good Christians, doth once and againe disclaime all that euill from being his, which he was unwillingly drawne vnto: *If I do that which I would not, I consent to the law which is good. Now then it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me.* *Rom. 7. 16. 20.*

Thirdly, he knoweth that they will pursue their owne sinfull actions, and thoughts with hue and crie: and if any desire breake out from them that is not good, they will send out many others after it, for humiliation, and pardon, and purging of their hearts. And therefore since themselves be so ready to complaine to him, he will be sparing of complaints against them. *2*

Consolation to the poore innocent seruants of God who yet are defamed with all kinde of false accusations. They are called hypocrites, heretickes, rebels, traytors, and all that naught is. *Dauid* was so charged by *Saul* & his courtiers: *Paul* was so charged by the malitious Iewes: the godly Iewes so charged by *Hammon*: *Christ* himselfe was so charged by the Priests, Scribes, and Pharises: all good men must looke to bee so charged by all sorts of sinners. Well it is for them that their hearts can witnesse that their desires are onely good, and better that the Lord seeth it, and best of all that they haue such a God as will openly publish it. If he knew as much by vs as the wicked say against vs, or would refuse to testifie that hee knoweth for vs, as euery one of vs were more righteous, so should hee be of all others most ignominious. For no creature that euer God made (the diuell not excepted) is so

much spoken against, as good men are, neither any so bad a name as they, if the violent tongues of malicious persons may make a good mans name to be bad. If sentence should passe vpon the godlie at the last day, according to the verdict of them that are not friends or parties, we should be all cast, and condemned, not one man would be acquitted. But here is an helpe against all these surmises of purposes within, and accusations of behaviour without: let appeale be made to him that beholdeth all, and he will cleare the righteous from all these imputations. This brought Iob to speake so confidently of his cause; *Oh that I had some to heare me; behold my signe that the Almighty will wintes for me: though mine aduersarie should write a booke against mee.* This brought Dauid with such affiance to repose himselfe vpon God: *Iudge me Lord according to my righteousness, and according to the innocencie that is in me.* And this brought Isaiah to vse such liberty and boldnes in challenging his quarellous enemies. *Hee is neere that iustifierh me: who will contend with me? Let vs stand together: who is mine aduersarie? Let him come neere to me. Behold the Lord will helpe me: who is he that can condemne me?* And yet this is not all the comfort that a iust man hath, though it be great, but is increased by the testimonie which God giueth of their desires, that seeing they are good, they shall easily be graunted, and seeing he taketh notice of no more then of those which are good, their other infirmities shall be no impediment. And therefore if they aske euermlasting life, why should they make question whether they shall haue it? If they seeke spirituall graces at his hands, what should hinder the finding of them? If they craue the good blessings for themselves and theirs, for greater experience of his fauour in things of this life, what should stay them from coming? When his iustice pronounceth their desires to be good, will not his goodnesse bee readie to fulfill them, especially his trueth hauing promised the performance thereof?

2

Terror for vngodly men which haue many finfull desires in their hearts against Gods glorie, and seruices, and people. Their soules with nothing seriously, but that which God hateth, and godly men feare, and pray against. Libertie for lewdnesse they desire as life, & those that like not of wicked waies, they abhorre

as much as death. Nothing pleaseth them so well as to heare of the sinnes or sorrowes of professours, and nothing grieueth them so much as to heare that wicked persons are either reclaimed from their dissolute behauiour, or punished for their shameful offences. Surely these men are not righteous, their desires are not good, and therefore whatsoever is in them, or commeth from them is euill, and displeasing to God, and dangerous, and damnable to their owne soules. As touching the other clause, for the euent of wicked mens hopes, see the second doctrine of the tenth chapter, and the first doctrine of the eighteenth verse of this chapter.

Verse 24. There is that scattereth, and is more increased; but hee that spareth more then right, commeth surely to pouertie.

They that disperse their goods, this way and that, bestowing them vpon such as are in want and necessitie, or otherwise employing them for the publike benefit of many, they that are readie and willing to part with their goods or monie for the relief of such as are in want or necessitie, or to any other good vses, are said to scatter them: and such take the best course to increase them, as sowing of corne is a meanes to helpe a man more and more.

And this he deliuereth with great wisdom and warinesse, saying, that some are more increased, and not all: for many scatter vpon dice, and cardes, and dogges, and whores, and such like, and they may looke to bee stript of all the rest, rather then to adde to that which they haue. On the other side hee that keepeth in that which he ought to lay out, and spareth that which duetie requireth him to spend, doth play the euil husband for the in pouerishing of his owne estate.

True liberalitie and mercie is not an hurt, but a furtherance to mens estates. Neuer any man was made the poorer by one penie for giuing of many, in due manner, but diuers haue bin the richer. The same rule holdeth in this case, as in all other the good gifts of God, that the good vsage of them doth vsually bring an augmentation of them. So it is to be found in learning and knowledge,

ledge, and in what good thing is it not so to be found? we neede not trauell farre for prooffe of our point in hand, but onely steppe ouer to the next verse following, and there wee shall haue a confirmation of the same. There we shall see that they which feede others shall be sat themselues (for so is the sense) and they which are as good streames to send out streames, shall haue such supply, as that they shall not be dried vp, but bee as well able to flow at the euening, as they were in the morning, and to morrow as much as to day, and the next yeere no lesse than in this.

Reasons. 1.

Prou. 3. 9. 10.

2. Cor. 9. 10.

First, they haue the promise of blessing from God which imploy their substance to the glorie of God, and the benefit of his poore seruants which are in want. *Honour the Lord, saith he, with thy riches, and the chiefe of all thine increase. So shall thy barnes bee filled with abundance, and thy presses shall burst with new wine.* And the Apostle *S. Paul* giueth as large an encouragement to the Corinthians in the new Testament. *Hee that ministreth seede to the sower, will minister likewise bread for food, and multiplie your seed, and increase the frutes of your beneuolence.* No field is more fertile to sow in, then the poore members of Iesus Christs: no seede is better then mercie, and Christian liberalitie: no weather or watering is more seasonable then Gods blessing: no crop of corne is so commodious and profitable as is the reward which God giueth both to soule and bodie.

2

Mercifull men procure praises to God to be plentifully offered, and prayers for themselues for all good happinesse: and therefore how can they but thrive and prosper? That reason doth *Paul* presse in many words to the Corinthians, that they might know that their liberalitie was not in vaine. He will increase the frutes of your beneuolence, that in euery sort ye may bee made rich to all liberalitie, which causeth, through vs, thanksgiuing to God, *2. Cor. 9. 11.* He dwelleth vpon the argument, and vrgeth it in euery verse to the end of the chapter.

3

Thirdly, the mercie of God towards other of his people which are in neede, doth often cause mercifull men the more to abound in riches. Since their desire is to be helpers of their afflicted brethren, their power shall serue to performe it: and since they haue begun it so well alreadie, they shall be able to doe it better hereafter,

after. And for this cause they are promised *all sufficiency* in all things, that they may abound in euery good worke. As it is written, *He hath sparfed abroad and giuen to to the poore: his beneuolence remaineth for euer*, 2. Cor. 9. 8. 9. He sheweth by the testimonie of the Psalme, that their communicating to the poore did not bring them to pouertie, that they should be compelled to giue vpgiuing, but did establish their state, that they might continue their beneuolence as long as they liued: for so much doth *euer* seeme to import in this place.

Intruſtion, to ſtrive againſt infidelitie which hindreth mens hearts from the cheerefullnes of mercie, and ſtaieſh their hands from many good contributions, and keepeſh them wholly from the exerciſe of liberality. They loſe by theſe meanes the opportunitie of much gaine, they debarre themſelues from that plentie which they might enioy. They will not receiue ſo much good as God will afford them, becauſe their hearts wil not afford them leaue to beleeue, that there is ſo good a reward provided for them that afford reliefe to poore Chriſtians. The Holy Ghoſt in the booke of Eccleſiaſtes aſſureth vs that nothing is loſt that is beſtowed in goodnes. He willeth men *to caſt their bread vpon the waters, and after many daies they ſhall finde it againe*. It is a kinde of prouerbiall ſpeech with vs, for fruitleſſe charges, to ſay, I might as well haue throwne my mony downe the riuer. But in this caſe though we ſeeme to throw our mony, or foode, into the riuer, or ſea it ſelfe, wee ſhall haue it reſtored with aduantage, yea, and when wee thinke all is forgotten. And therefore he proceedeth to incourage men that they ſhould lay about them; and not ſpare, in the exerciſe of liberality. *Giue* (ſaith he) *to ſeuene, and alſo to eight*. Beſtow vpon many, and when thou haſt done that, make not an end, but giue to more than thou didſt before. As if hee ſhould haue ſaid, beſtow as much ſeede as thou haſt land to lay it on: and get as much land as thou haſt ſeede to ſow it with. But infidelitie can hold no longer in hearing this, but our commeth her worthie queſtion: How ſhall I liue my ſelfe hereafter, if I giue away all now? who knoweth what hard times be comming? Now he ſtoppeth her mouth with retortion of her owne reaſon. No man knoweth what euill daies may come, and therefore wiſe-

Vſe. 1.

Eccleſ. 11. 1. 2.

dome.

dome would that we should make prouision for our selues before hand. And nothing is surer laid vp, then that which is charitablie laide out; that will serue for a deere yeere, and a rainie day, as wee are wont to speake in our prouerbe.

2

Reproofe of the follic of miserable niggards, who being greedie of getting more, know not how to vse that which they haue, and therefore take the way to consume all. The one halfe of our text is a threatning against them, and all the reasons which did confirme the good estate of liberall persons, do as much conclude the hard case of pinching neere misers, by the contrary. They put their talent to no good vse, and therefore may daily looke to haue it taken away from them. They intitle themselues to the threatnings and curses of the law, and therefore cannot auoide the iudgements, whereof the stroake of pouertie and needines is one among others. Sighes and complaints goe vp to God against them, but few prayers, and no thanksgiuing at all for them. Their bencuolence and goodnes doth not stand the poore Saints in such steed, as that the Lord for their sakes should commit any part of his substance to their hands, or leaue that with them, which they haue singred alreadie.

Verse 25. The liberall soule shall waxe fat, and hee that giveth plentifullie shall powre forth.

THese words haue affinitie with the former part of the verse next before, and are ioyned to it partly in way of explication, and partly in way of illustration. And therefore first he sheweth who obtaine that blessing to increase by scattring, & that is they whose liberalitie beginneth at their hearts: and then he declareth the prosperous successe thereof by a similitude from wel-springs which receiue as much water inwardly, as they send forth outwardly, which, if they should faile of issue, would also faile of fulnes, the waters diuerting their course some other way, where they might haue better passage, or else insuling themselues in the earth, and mould of the adiacent places round about, and so make a quagmire. The same comparison doth *Isaiah* vse for the same purpose: *The Lord shall satisfie thy soule continually in drought,*
and

and make fat thy bones: and thou shalt bee like a watered garden, and like a spring of water, whose waters faile not.

He that expecteth comfort for sound mercie, must not onely *Deff.* applie his hand, but his soule to the exercise of well doing. That is the seate of loue, which giueth life to all good actions, and without which in regard of themselues, it is as good neuer a whit, as neuer the better. For though a man should feede the poore with *1. Cor. 13. 3.* all his goods, and haue not loue, it profiteth him nothing. Esaias conditioneth with thē who would haue the Lord to powre forth his mercies and blessings vpon them, that they should not onely powre out their foode and victuals, but their soules also to the hungry. *Isa. 58. 10.*

First, there is required a needefull worke of the soule in this *Reasons. 1* seruice, and that is wisdom and discretion. So is a mercifull man commended in the Psalmes: *A good man is mercifull and Psal. 112. 5.* loudeth, and will measure his affaires by iudgement. And so is a liberall man described by the Prophet Esaias, *That he will denie of Isai. 12. 8.* liberall things. He will meditate where his gifts may best be placed: what is fittest to be giuen: how much is meete for him to contribute: in what manner he should performe it.

Secondly, compassion must be ioyned with it, that the helper, *2* and the partie holpen, may mutually communicate their cases each with other: he that is in prosperitie bearing a part of his brothers burthen, and he that is in aduersitie receiuing a portion of his neighbours blessings. This could *Iob* truly testifie of himselfe, that he vsed to weepe for them that were in trouble, and his *Iob 30. 25.* soule was in heavinesse for the poore.

Thirdly, it must be seasoned with cheerefulness, that it may be *3* more comfortable to man that shall receiue it, and likewise more acceptable to God that will reward it. Hereof doth the Apostle admonish the Corinthians to an especiall regard, saying; *As euery man wisheth in his heart, so let him giue, not grudgingly, nor of 2. Cor. 9. 7.* necessitie, for God loueth a cheerefull giuer.

Reprooffe of them whose soules haue neuer any dealing in doing of good, vnlesse it be to peruert all with Pharisaicall hypocrisie and vaine glorie. They giue hand ouer head to ragge and ragge, without difference of any, except they shut out the best, *Vfe. 1.*

and bestow on the worst, frowning on them that are the most honest, and feeding of them that of all others are the most unworthie. They contribute to good vses with no lesse difficultie, than if a distresse of a fine or amercement were to bee extorted from them. Commiseration and pitie are meere strangers vnto them, their hearts haue no acquaintance at all with them.

- 2 Consolation to poore men, that they are not excluded from the grace and blessednesse of being merciful, though they attaine not to the state and abilitie of being wealthie. Mercie is not placed with money in the purse, but dwelleth with loue and kindnes in the heart. He that can mourne with such as doe mourne, hee that can pray for them that bee in distresse, he that can any way seeke to comfort the afflicted, may truly be said to haue a soule of blessing, and is of God himselfe esteemed mercifull. The successe which mercifull men shall finde for their owne estate, hath been already declared in the former verse, and therefore in this may be passed over.

Verse 26. *He that withdraweth corne, the people will curse him: but blessing shall be vpon the head of him that selleth corne.*

IT is not vnlawfull to keepe in corne, as Ioseph did in the time of plentie to bee provided against scarcitie and dearth: but when we may spare it, and others neede it, then to withhold the selling thereof in hope to raise the price, this tenderth to a common hurt, and therefore will cause a common complaint of the people against vs. But on the other side, blessing shall be on his head that selleth corne, he shall not only haue the good testimonie and prayers of men beneath, but the blessing of God himselfe from aboue descend vpon him. Provided that his heart be vp-right therein, not so much respecting the price in selfe-loue, as the profiting of his brother in Christian charitie: and that he vse all other due circumstances accordingly. As to sell that which is good at a reasonable rate, and performe it in due season, and full measure, and such like.

Doff. 1.

They are after a sort publique enemies of the countrie, that procure, or seeke for a dearth. The Lord would haue vs to collect

lest and deeme what harme they doe by the effects that ensue thereupon. The exclamation and outcrie, not of one person, or familie, but of the multitude of the people, doth intend in this case some grievance among them. Scarcitie of foode is one of the most grievous iudgements wherewith the Lord is wont to plague a nation, and how can we then take them for our friends, which wish so grievous a punishment? *Salomon* by prayer made a way for the prayers both of the whole people, and the particular friends and members thereof, to come to God for remouall of such a miserie; then what are they to be accounted that send forth desires, and put forth endeouours to call for it, and bring it?

1.Reg.8.38.

First, they are heauie aduersaries of the poore, and practise to adde sorrow to them that are already in sorrow. The greatest weight of this burthen is like to light vpon their backs, because they are least provided of armour to keepe it off. An example thereof is to be seene in the prophecie of *Amos*, where the selfe-same effect is wrought by the selfe-same meanes which wee are now in hand with: *Heare this, O ye that swallow up the poore, that ye may make the needie of the land to faile, saying, When will the new Moone be gone, that we may sell corne? and the Sabbath, that we may set forth wheate, and make the Ephraim small, and the sheckell great, and falsifie the weights by deceit? and buy the poore for siluer, and the needie for shooes: yea and sell the refuse of the wheate.* They had long kept vp the corne for this purpose to haue it grow deare, and now the time serued the turne, and it must bee opened in all the haste, they thought the daies of the Lords owne seruice too long, vntill they were at it. And now woe to the poore, for the plot is laid to pray vpon them. They shall buy the refuse deare, which is little worth, and sell themselues cheape to pay for it.

Reasons. I.

Amos 8.4.5.6.

Secondly, they are pernicious to men of all sorts and conditions, vnlesse it be to a few of those few which haue corne to sell. And to this point let them speake which can speake by experience, and experience hath taught, not long sithence, the greater number of housekeepers, that the higher the prices of corne doe rise, the lower the states of families fall. And the sellers of vituals do the more fill their purses with mony, the lesse the poore seruants fill their bellies with meate. Aske the traueiler by the

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way; aske the labourer in the countrie; aske the tradesmen in the towne; aske the common sort, yea almost any sort of inhabitants in the citie, and which of all these will say, or truly may say, it is no burthen to vs that things are no cheaper? A great part of their care is to make prouision for household: a great part of their labour is swallowed vp in prouision: a great part of time is too little for their labour. So that their care is more, their labour greater, their commons shorter, and state much weaker. Many be restrained from doing further good: many be compelled to lessen former familie: many thereby be brought to manifold inconueniences, more than we expresse or thinke of.

Vse. 1.

Reproofe of all that affect such a mischiefe, liuing in hope, for their owne priuate lucre, that so great an hurt will grow to the publike state of the land: but specially of such as take the way, and vse the meanes to effect this euill, and to draw vpon it such a iudgement. And of this sort are they which practise that which is here declared to be a noisome sinne, namely to store vp their come that no man shall haue any benefit by it, whiles there is any good substance in it. They are much more kinde hearted to Rats, and Mice, and Wesils, than they are to their brethren: for they shall haue all freely giuen them for nothing, and men cannot buy any of it for their mony. And therefore what can they say for themselves why they should not be as much liable to the woe and curse which *S. Iames* doth denounce, as those whose other riches were corrupt: whose garments were moath-eaten for want of wearing: whose gold and siluer was canckred and rustie for want of vsage? But worse are they which not onely hoord vp their owne corne, that it shall neuer come forth seasonably to preuent a dearth: but ingrosse other mens also for the same purpose, that they may make their gaine thereof to the detriment and hurt of many others. But of all others, worst are they which not onely keepe back corne from the market, but from the barnes: not from sale, but from sowing: which refuse to yeeld tillage and seed to the ground: which yet further, by force or fraud, extort the ground from other men that they shall neither till nor sow it. These drie vp the springs of the Market, that the streames of plentie should be restrained from flowing to it: these bring a
curse.

curse vpon the earth, and make it barren in comparison of the *Isai. 5. 9. 10.* store it was wont to yeeld. These labour for depopulation of houses, and townes, and fields, and people.

Consolation to them that bring an vpright heart to selling, 2
though they cannot be so large in giuing: therein they doe a seruice to God; therein they performe a worke of loue to their neighbours: and therefore they shall be better satisfied at Gods hand than at the buyers: and his pay will be better in grace and goodnes, than the other can be in gold and siluer.

The people will curse him, &c. It is a grieuous plague to be pursued iustly with the cries and clamours of the people. True it is that *Jeremy* and others of the most faithfull seruants of God haue been spoken euill of, and cursed by the multitude. And so it is Doff. 2.
true that *as the sparro by flying, and the swallow by flying escape, so the curse that is causelesse shall not come.* Iere. 15. 10.
And it is most true, they whom men reuile and persecute, and say all manner of euill for Prou. 16. 2.
Christ his sake falsely, are blessed. But this is also very true, that to be spoken against for sins sake, truly, is not a matter of blessednes, but miserie: the wings of a mans name & reputation will be clipt so short that it shall not auoide the stroke and shot of a curse, if it be dulie caused. In this same manner are hurtfull men threatned, which flatter, or countenance, or beare out wicked persons in their sinfull courses. *He that saith to the wicked, thou art righteous, him shall the people curse, and the multitude shall abhorre him.* Pro. 24. 24.

First, if a good name be a thing most desireable, and a treasure Reasons. 5.
to be preferred before gold and siluer, and other precious commodities, then it must needs be that an euill name, and infamie is a thing very loathsome, and worse then the losse of any earthly thing, yea then very needines and beggerie.

Secondly, they which by their owne desert haue stirred vp complaints against themselues, are not onely smitten with the breaich of mans mouth, but with the stroake of Gods hand. Hee purposeth it in his counsell: he threatneth it in his word: hee effecteth it in his prouidence: he hearkeneth thereunto, in pitie to them that be oppressed: and in anger, against them that are oppressors. Neither is this the case of violent men alone, and such as heare euill for hard dealing, but of all sorts of sinners which

Vja

blemish themselves with any kinde of misbehaviour.

Reprehension of impudent persons which haue hardened their faces, that they cannot blush, or bee ashamed, nor desist from their shamefull misdemeaners, howsoeuer they are thought of, or speake against. If they bee exhorted to any good dutie which carrieth no credit among such as are carnall, or dissuaded from any euill custome which carrieth no disgrace among them that are sinfull, their present answer is, What will men say? But let them heare that their pride, or vnthrifines, or couetousnesse, or vnconstancie, or faithlesnesse in couenants, &c. is much censured, many take great exceptions against them, they shift their hands and goe quite on the other side: Say all what they will, I care not for it: better men then I haue been spoken against, Christ himselfe had scarce a good word of the most. But the question is not how good men haue been dealt with, but how they deserued to be dealt with. True it is and we confesse it, that many refused to speake good words of Christ; but did Christ euer prouoke them to it, by euill deedes to them? But words (say they) are winde, and reports a wonder for nine daies. But their crimes, say we, are more then winde, and their guiltines will not be blowne away in nine thousand yeeres. That which men speake truely against them, God will charge more fully vpon them at the last day: and his wordes will be as fire, and his sentence will not vanish away at all, but continue to their shame and torment for euer.

Verse 27. *He that diligently seeketh good, shall get fauour: but he that seeketh euill, it shall come to him.*

Dott.

HE that seeketh carefully with an vpright heart to benefit those among whom he liueth, in any good manner, taketh the best way to win the hearts of the people: and is like to haue the hearts of good men knit vnto him, and certaine to obtaine and inioy Gods fauour and louing kindnesse. And he that plot-teth, or practiseth mischief against others, of all others shall be most hurt thereby himselfe.

He that would bee well thought of, must not onely wish well but indeuour to do good to his brethren. To beare good affection

to mankind, but especially to Gods Church and people is a thing pleasing to God, and godly men; but men see not the affection to be good, further then it is manifested by effects: and God seeth that affection not to be good, which is voide of a working vigour and fruitfulness. By what steps did *Nehemiah* ascend to that estimation which is had of him, in the Church in the Scriptures, and in Gods owne presence now in heauen? He inquired of the state of his brethren, he mourned for them, he fasted for them, he prayed to God for them, he spake to the King for them, he undertooke a journey for them, he was indaungered, he was reproched, he was traduced and all for their sakes. And therefore it an was effectually petition which hee offered to God: *Remember me O my God in goodnes, according to all that I haue done for this people.* How came *Onesiphorus* to be so deere to *Paul*, and so much beloued of God himselfe, who hath registred his name in an euerlasting record, euen in his owne holy scriptures? by shewing himselfe kind, and bold, and bountifull to the Apostle. He did not onely desire that *Paul* might doe well, but tooke the paines to come to Rome, and there also visited him in the prison, and so provided that by his meanes, he might doe the better.

Nchem. 5. 19

2. Tim. 1. 16.

First it is the nature of loue, to expresse it selfe by testimonies of Beneficence and goodnes. For it is not a loue in truth if it bee not in deede, as well as in word and tongue. 1. Ioh. 3. 18.

Reasons. 1.

Secondly, there is no sincerity where is no exercise of welldoing, and therefore it will do no more good to our selues to thinke, or say we desire well to them whom we set our selues no way to doe good vnto, then it doth to an hungrie person to bid him eate, and giue him no meate, or to one that is cold, to wish him warmth, and minister to him neither fire nor clothing.

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Iam. 2. 19.

Reproofe of them that take a contrarie course to get loue and good liking. As for Gods fauour they either count it to be so little worth, as they regard it not at all, but thinke the least well doing too great a price for it; or else to be so common and ordinarie, as that it will be found without seeking; or els such an excellencie to be in themselves, as that God cannot but take delight in them, howsoever he be disposed towards others. And for mens affections and good opinion, they hope to come by them by easier

meanese

meanes: and that is by making themselves popular in practise of some plausible sins, in yeelding libertie for all licentious courses to them that live vnder them, in procuring impunity to disordered persons. So that whereas God in his word here saith, hee that seeketh good shall get fauour, they in their deedes say, hee shall get fauour that exerciseth euill.

For the other part of this verse, looke the seuenteenth verse.

Verse 28. *He that trusteth in his riches, shall fall: but the righteous shall flourish as a branch.*

HE that so reposeth vpon his wealth, as that for loue and desire thereof, hee is willing, and in confidence thereof hee is bold to sinne against God; bee which hopefull it will keepe him from troubles, or rid him out of troubles, or any way conferre happinesse to him, this man shall surely bee brought downe, and fall into mischiese. And so by the same proportion, shall all those which trust to men, or to wit, or to any other creature. On the other side, iust men are all on the mending hand; they are well planted, they grow in a fruitfull ground by the riuers of water, they haue the Lord Iesus Christ for their roote, they haue God the Father to dresse and keepe them, and therefore they shall flourish as a branch which groweth and hath Greene leaues. The drought of aduersitie shall not hurt them, the dewes of wholesome prosperitie shall not faile them. They shall haue safetie for their bodies, graces for their soules, competencie for their state, and all good furtherances for their euerlasting glorie. Thus standeth the opposition. The wicked trust in their riches, and they shall fall like rotten boughes: but the righteous trust in the Lord, and they shall grow like flourishing branches.

Doct.

Though the staves of many wicked men seeme to be the stronger, yet the states of all godly men proue to be the surer.

If safetie consisted in wealth, and happinesse in height, wee could not but yeeld that diuers sinfull persons were grounded in great safety and happinesse: for they haue the world at will, & are mounted vp to eminent places. And if perill did alwayes accompanie

panic pouertie, and miserie likewise a meane condition, who could denie, but that the most of the best men, should euer bee found in the worst case, and of all others the most miserable? for that they are commonly poore and base in the world? But if God in his iust iudgements doe lift vp his enemies hie, to cast them downe the; lower and if his seruants take rooting low, that they may grow vp the hier then let the wicked take heede of a downefall, and then let the righteous not doubt of a rising. The thirtie seuen and seuentie third Psalmes, are treatises wholly vpon this argument, besides many other texts of Scripture. And this cometh to passe to both sides. First, in regard of the different, and contrarie choise which they haue made of helpers to themselves. What doe sinfull persons and wicked men take to bee their staues to leane vpon, and that with their whole weight? Euen fleshly supports, as goods and riches which are slender reedes, that will breake, and run into their hands and shoulders, and lay them flat on the ground. These they build vpon as a foundation most firme and stable, these they depend vpon as friends most sure and faithfull: these they trust vnto as holds most strong and mightie. And yet is there any thing more vncertaine, more deceitfull, more weake and feeble then these are? They bee fugitiue and away they goe, when they should sticke to a man: they be false and performe nothing that they promise. They say, giue vs your heart, especially when we increase, we haue power to doe you all good. But David saith, *If riches increase, set not your heart thereon* God spake once, twice haue I heard it, that power belongeth only to God. There was neuer any Papist, or heathen man more deceiued in dumbe Idols, then worldlings be in the hope of their monie and substance. The images haue as much sense to heare, and speake, and deale for them which pray to them, as gold and siluer and other treasures haue ability in themselves to helpe them, that make them their gods: and many more are illuded by these, then by the others. And whom doe the godly make their refuge? In whom is their hope fixed? in God omnipotent, eternall, endles in mercie, wisdom, and truth, whose good prouidence doth neuer faile them in life: whose gracious fauour doth not forsake them at death: And that one word may comprehend all, and

Reasons. 1.

Psal. 62. 10. 11.

that is infinitely much, and more then heauen and earth can comprehend, he is God every way for them, al-sufficient.

- 2 Secondly, in regard of their behauiour towards the Lord. The wicked commit an execrable sacriledge & spirituall treason, they cast off that loyaltie that is due only to him, & yeeld it to the abiect and contemptible creatures: for so may they be called when they are matched as equals, or preferred as superiours to their Creator. And this is done in all vaine confidence, as it was spoken of trust to flesh & blood, so to all of that kind: *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord.* Confidence is a prerogative and royaltie, that the Lord neuer communicateth to any, vpon any conditions. He so calleth for loue to himselfe, that men also should bee loued for his sake, and feared and reioyced at, and the like is in other affections: but to trust in any besides him, is as much as in vs is, to set the imperiall diadem of heauen and earth vpon their heads. Now the godly relying altogether vpon his fidelitie and power yeeld him homage, and declare themselves to be his loyall, faithfull, and obedient subiects, and performe a most acceptable seruice vnto him.

Jerem. 17. 5.

Vse. I.

Instruction, to be so much more industrious for righteousness, than riches, by how much it is better to bee a liuing tree, than a dead stocke: and to stand fast in the state of all good happinesse, than to fall into sinne, and shame, and miserie, and destruction. So much goodnes as any man hath, so much he hath of faith, so farre he sheweth the sappe and vertue of his roote: so certaine and assured he may be of perpetuall firmnesse and stabilitie. And looke what measure of vaine confidence is in every one, so much sinfulness is in him (and therefore the contrarietie is set betweene such as trust in their riches, and the righteous; because hee that hath affiance in his wealth, must needs bee euill, and hee that is righteous must needs trust in God) and so sure it is that Gods strokes and iudgements will pursue him, and to his owne inability of standing, he shall haue this added, that God will push at him, and cast him downe.

- 3 Terror for couetous Idolaters, which make their goods their gods, and their greedie getting their deuotion, and their plentie their

their safetie, and their pastures, fields, barnes, shops, warehouses, or coffers, their heauen. Like foolish men, *they waite vpon lying vanities, and for sake their owne mercie.* It is as easie for a cropp of corne to thriue vpon a waste Heath, or in the midst of a thornie hedge; or thicket of bushes, as it is for grace to grow in their hearts: and it is as easie for a cable rope to goe through an needles eye, as for them to enter into the kingdome of heauen. And yet they think al to be well, and their state to be happie: yea they presume so farre of their owne standing, that vpon confidence of their power they doubt not but to giue others the fall: they hope that their withered rotten stickes shall be able to roote vp and throw downe the strongest Cedars that grow in the Church of God. Such a one was *Doeg*, that thought to doe great things against *Dauid*, but *Danid* did after a sort defie him, and bad him doe his worst, yea he derided, and told him that the worst would bee his owne: *Why boastest thou (saith he) in thy wickednesse, O man of power? the louing kindnesse of God endureth daily. God shall destroy thee for euer: he shall take thee and plucke thee out of thy tabernacle, and roote thee out of the land of the liuing. The righteous also shall see it, and feare, and shall laugh at him, saying, Behold the man that tooke not God for his strength, but trusted to the multitude of his riches. But I shall be like a greene Oliue tree in the house of God: for I trusted in the mercie of God for euer and euer.*

Ionah 2.3.

Mark. 10. 24.
25.Psal. 52. 1. 5. 6.
&c.

3

Consolation, to godly men that haue receiued to their owne hearts, and giuen to other men, a testimonie of faith and righteousness: no enimie without or corrections within shall deprive them of their comfort, or of any good blessing that concerneth this present life, or their euerlasting saluation.

Verf. 29. *He that troubleth his owne house shall inherite the wind, and the foole shall be seruant to the wise in heart.*

HE is said to trouble his house, which doth mispend his goods, and misguide his affaires, and misgouerneth his people that dwell with him. That either doth corrupt them with sinfulness, or molest them with frowardnes, or afflict them with miserie. When he either maketh them patients to beare the bur-

then of his follie, or agents to commit follie with him. He shall inherite the winde, that is, shall bring al to nothing. His substance shall flie vp like smoake into the aire, and nothing be left to maintaine him on earth. And when all his goods are gone, his libertie must goe after. This foole shall be seruant to the wise in heart, that is, to one who is more prouident, discrete and carefull for his state and household. They were wont in great wants to sell themselves for seruants, as the Egyptians did in *Iosephs* time. And for great debts to bee taken by the creditours, and either made their bondmen, or else sold to others. And one of these, saith he, is like to be the case of this vnchristie trouble-house.

Gen. 47. 19.

Matth. 18. 25.

Dott.

He that would not vndoe himselfe, let him not disorder his familie and domestickall affaires. It neerely concerneth an householder to know, that his house is laden with his whole estate, that his people saile together with him in the same vessell, for his vse. And if he will neither play the good Pilot himselfe in his owne place, nor suffer them to be good Mariners in theirs, how soone shall he runne his barke vpon the Rockes? how quickly shall hee make shipwracke of all that he hath?

Reasons. 1

First, he takes the way to bring a curse vpon all, by due desert. The Lord hath made him a steward, and in diuers respects committed a trust vnto him, which hee doth vnfaithfully discharge. He hath put his goods into his hands, to be orderly disposed of, as may be most for his glorie; and those he expendeth vpon his owne lusts, and to Gods dishonour: and is it not iust then that they should be taken from him? He hath made him an ouerseer of the persons that liue vnder him, that he should be an example and guide vnto them in all vertuous behaviour, and he groweth to be a dissolute Master of Misrule; is it not equall that another should take his place of superiority, & he be made an vnderling?

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Secondly, either his household is discouraged from diligence by his crooked peruersenes, or else withdrawne from faithfulness by learning to be sinfull, and both of these tend one way, namely, to the ouerthrow of his estate.

Vse. 1.

Admonition to bee good gouernours of our families, and good husbands for our estates, not onely in conscience to obey God for our cuerlasting saluation, but in Christian prouidence
for

for our present condition; if not to get, yet to saue, as to preserve our goods, so to retaine our freedome. For albeit that villenage and bondage be not now in vse among vs, yet imprisonment is not altogether out of vse. And euery one is so faire in seruitude, and in the creditours power, as hee wanteth abilitie to pay his debts. He may well be said to be another mans seruant, whose state and libertie doth stand at another mans curtesie.

Terror for them that giue ouer themselves to such sinnes as be not onely troublefome, but trouble it selfe to their houses. Those wee meane which cause the Gouvernours to lay burthens vpon their inferiours, and God to lay iudgements vpon the Gouvernours. Wee will not make mention of many, nor insitt long vpon them which wee mention. Pride must haue the first place, because it is predominant and carrieth a great sway among the rest. From it groweth contempt, and disdain, contentions, railings, and all manner of imperious insolencie. And for recompence thereof, and of all the cursed effects which it produceth against God and man, the Lord threatneth to *destroy the house of proud men.* Whoredome and incontinencie also worke much mischief to families, and most of all to the heads themselves. The holy Ghost in this booke, is very frequent in this point. As, *the stranger shall be filled with thy strength, and thy labours shall be in the house of a stranger.* And, *because of the whorish woman a man is brought to a morsell of bread.* And Iob saith, that if hee should that way haue defiled himselfe, it would haue bin a fire denouncing to destruction, & which would haue rooted out all his increase. Gaming, riot, and vnthrifines so apparantly shew themselves in this ranke, that it shall be needlesse to discourse of them. Onely Couetousnes we will conclude with, which seemeth to be an help to raise vp an house, and yet vndermineth the very foundations of it. This maketh men fierce, and violent, bitter and cruell, like Beares and Lions among their people. And this the Lord himselfe hath reckoned for one of these turbulent sinnes, and so would haue vs to account of it. *He that is greedie of gaine troubleth his owne house: but he that hateth gifts, shall live.* As if he should say, If men be not wearie of this wretched greedines, it will make them in all corrupt manner to pursue their commodities,

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Prou. 15. 25.

Prou. 5. 10.
Prou. 6. 26.

Iob 31. 12.

Prou. 15. 27.

dities, to the annoyance of theirs, till Gods wrath pursue them to death and vndoing.

And whereas many proud persons, and vncleane, and couetous, hold vp their heads still, and decay not in state, they come not into other mens dangers, but haue many others fallen into their hands; yet let not men thinke there is a possibilitie of impunitie, because they are not scourged with the least rod, but reserved to a greater: for pouertie is one of the easiest punishments. What though they come not to inherit the wind here? yet if they inherit damnation in the world to come, what gaine they by the change? what though they bee not brought to bee seruants to men? yet if they bee seruants to sinne, presently, and shall receive the wages of sinne hereafter, how much is their case the better?

Verse 30. *The fruit of the righteous is as a tree of life, and hee that winneth soules is wise.*

THe meaning of these words is, that a godly man is very plentifull in bringing forth fruit, and his fruite exceeding profitable to them that receive it. Especially his instructions, consolations, prayers, & other spirituall meanes that he vseth, to conuert, or confirme the hearts of his brethren. And he himself also is not without the fruit of his owne fruit, which is intimated here by pronouncing him wise that winneth soules, that is, which with desire, and indeuour faithfully and discreetly, by Gods owne meanes, according to his place and calling either doth draw men out of their sinnes and ignorance, or else faileth of successe therein, not by his negligence, and want of loue, but rather by their stubbornesse and want of will. And herewith the Prophet doth satisfie himselfe, whatsoeuer should bee the issue of his ministerie. *Now saith the Lord that formed me from the wombe to bee his seruant, that I may bring Iacob againe to him, though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the Lord: and my God shall be my strength.* On the other side wee dare not take vpon vs to iustifie the hearts and states of all those which haue been occasions of any mans conuersion, if it bee not their fruite: nor to extenuate the

the efficacy of euery vnregenerate mans ministerie, that his doctrine should winne none to saluation. It is graunted without question, or gaine saying, that he may prepare before, and build vp after, and we remember not any such stint or restraint spoken of, but that he may also couert, especially before his life is stained with any sinfull behauiour, that might bring his ministerie into contempt. The power of preaching standeth in the ordinance of God, by the worke of his spirit, and not in the person of the messenger, that doth publish it.

Of all people, none doe so much good as the godly. *Doct.* Look how farre the tree of life, which was the best in paradise, excelled all the brambles and briars which are the worst on the wild wast, so farre doe such as feare God surmount the godlesse in goodnes. In the first Psalme, religious men which giue themselves to the exercise of pietie are compared to trees, that yeeld the most, and best and ripest fruite; and sinful men which giue themselves to the practise of vanity are likened to chaffe, or rather the dust of chaffe, *Psal. 1. 3.* which is good for nothing. In the second of the Canticles the godly are resembled to the most beautifull and pleasant lilies *Cant. 2. 2.* which yeeld delight to those that gather them; and the wicked to thornes or thistles which doe annoy those that meddle with them. In other places of scripture the seruants of God are called sheepe; which for lambe, and fleece, and flesh, and euery other way, are commodious, insomuch that they make the very ground the better which they sit vpon; and the slaues of sinne are called by the names of Wolves, and Foxes, and such kinde of beasts, which are very hurtfull, and be readie to doe mischief wherefoeuer they come. In what respect the fruite of the righteous is so profitable, it will appeare by the proportion it hath with the tree of life whereunto it is compared. First in regard of the cause, it is said *Reasons. T. Reue. 22. 23.* that it groweth by the riuer of life, whose waters feede the roote thereof, and the roote sendeth vp the sap, and the sap sendeth out the fruite. And so the good which a good man doth, ariseth not from his wit, nor naturall disposition, nor fleshly wisdom, but springeth from the word, and spirit of God in his heart, *Gal. 5. 22.*

Secondly, as touching the manner thereof it is said that it is continually

Ezech. 47. 12.

1. Pet. 1. 5. 6.

Mat. 25. 35. 36

continually bearing without stay, or failing, not once a yeere, but once in a moneth, not in sommer only, but in winter also, and every time new kinds of fruit, and not of one sort alone (as it falleth out commonly with other trees, for in them the same branch neuer varieth the kind) and that rotteth not, nor droppeth downe with ripenesse. In like sort doth the spirit of grace make Gods children constant in well doing, and that also in performance of many dueties, according to the varietie of occasions and opportunities offered. *They ioyne vertue with their faith: and with vertue knowledge: and with knowledge temperance: and with temperance patience: and with patience godlines: and with godlines brotherlie kindnes: and with brotherly kindnes loue. If they see the members of Christ hungrie, they giue them meate; if thirstie, they giue them drinke: if naked, they clothe them: if they bee strangers, they lodge them: if they be sicke, they visite them: if they be in prison, they come vnto them, &c.*

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Prou. 10. 21.

Vse. 1.

Thirdly for the effect, the tree of life was for meate, and the leaues for medicine, and both for life: and no lesse vertue proceedeth from righteous persons, *their lippes doe feede many: their tongues are wholesome, their instructions are as a wellspring of life, to turne away from the snares of death.* Pro. 13. 14.

Admonition for every one to search his wayes, and to trie his state by this rule. If thou be a fruitfull tree, thou art a righteous man: if thou be giuen to shew mercie, thou canst not be vnfruitfull; if thy labour bee to kill sinne, and to helpe mens soules to euerlasting life, then who can denie thee to bee truly mercifull? In this case though the diuell come roaring with grieuous accusations; though he would perswade thee, that thou art an hypocrite; and they would perswade others, that thou art an arrogant proud person; yet be not dismaied at the matter. Saran saith, that thou bearest a dissembling heart; but God seeth that thou liuest a sincere life. They impute thy speeches, and other behauiour, to pride and vaine glorie: but thine owne soule knoweth that they proceede from loue and vnfaigned faithfulness. And let this be spoken for thy comfort, that shall neuer faile thee, that those which are trees of life to men, are trees of delight to God himselfe; and he is nothing lesse pleased with them, than his people
are

are benefited by them. And so the Apostle saith, they please God in all things, *which are fruitfull in all good works.* And so doth Christ speake of his Church, and the members thereof in *Salomons songs*: *My sister, my spouse, is as a garden inclosed. Thy plants are as an orchard of Pomegranets, with sweete fruits, as Camphire, Spikenard, and Saffron, Calamus, and Cinamon, with all trees of Incense, Myrrhe, and Aloes, with all the chiefe spices.* But if thou bee fruitlesse, thou art voide of righteousness, and so destitute of Gods fauour, and thine owne safetie. For vnfruitfull trees hath God marked out to be hewen down for fire wood. But worse are they, by farre, and in more dangerous case, that bring forth too much fruite, but it is of the flesh, and to the flesh, works of pride, works of crueltie, cursed blasphemie and swearing, notorious riot, and vnchristiannes, drunkennes, filthines, contempt of Magistrates, contempt of Ministers, contempt of preaching, and malice against all godly Christians. *Their vine is the vine of Sodom, and of the vines of Gomorah: their grapes are grapes of gall, their clusters be bitter. Their tree is the poison of dragons, and the cruell gall of aspes.*

Reproofe of them that make lesse account of these trees of life, than of a thornie hedge, than of nettles, than of most vnfauourie weedes, than of plants that bring forth deadly poison. They distaste no men so much as good men, and the better they are, the worse they like them. *Jeremy came and offered his fruit to a people that stood in great neede to eate of the tree of life: for they were readie to perish with death. But they practised to abolish that fruit which was offered for their preseruacion, and to take away his life, which sought to saue theirs. For so hath the Lord declared their conspiracie: Let vs destroy the tree with the fruit thereof, and cut him out of the land of the liuing, that his name may be no more in memorie.* Which almost of all the Prophets sped better? How much more fauourably was *Paul* dealt with? And especially Christ Iesus, the very tree of life, and Lord of life, and life it selfe, whom all the rest did but resemble? His perfect fruit they trampled on, & laboured to dig him vp by the roote. And so they dealt still with his messengers and seruants, not making vse of their companie, but abhorring it: not desiring to be partakers of

Col. 1. 10.

Cant. 4. 12.

13. 14.

Matth. 3. 10.

Deut. 32. 32.

33.

2

Jerem. 11. 19.

their knowledge, and wisdom, and other graces, but to suppress them.

Deft. 2.

He that winneth soules is wise, &c. It is the note of a wise man, to shew mercie to mens soules. Fooles cannot easily finde out the maladie of sinne; fooles faile of all experience of good medicines that may cure a sinfull heart; fooles feele not the burthen of their owne iniquities, and therefore cannot be compassionate towards others for theirs. Only wisdom doth shew the disease, and the remedie, and moueth mens hearts in pitie to helpe them that are infected with it. That which *Salomon* professeth to be true of himselfe, is also verified of every good man in his measure; *The more wise Ecclesiastes was, the more he taught the people knowledge.* And to conuert it the other way: the more any man teacheth the people knowledge, the more wise he is.

Eccle. 12. 9.

Reasons. 1.

First, he performeth an acceptable seruice to God, which no foole can euer doe. He is a diligent and profitable husbandman for seeding, weeding, and haruest worke. He is a valiant and skillfull souldier to discomfit Satan his strongest enemy; to winne his holds from him, and to rescue his spoyle and captiues out of his hand. Yea not onely to set his prisoners at libertie, but to winne away the hearts of his owne souldiers; that they shal both forsake him, and set themselves in battell against him.

2

Secondly, he is very prouident for his owne good, and prepareth a blessed reward for himselfe, against the appearance of Iesus Christ. And of such men, and of that state, speaketh the Prophet Daniel: *They that make men wise, shall shine as the brightness of the firmament: and they that turne many to righteousness, shall shine as the starres, for euer and euer.*

Dan. 12. 3.

Vse. 1.

Incouragement, to gaine mens soules to God, and saluation to mens soules, though we should lose that liking and fauour which was wont to be shewed to our selues. What though wee be tearmed busie fooles for our labour? doth not God cleere vs, and say that we are wise men, and well exercised? What though wee be censured for sillie creatures, that make our friends to be our foes? doth not God commend vs for our good prouidence in making him to be our friend? What though wee draw vpon our selues, contempt, displeasure, and persecution from wicked persons for the present? doth not God tell vs that wee shall obtaine glorie, and

and fauour, and peace at his hands for euermore hereafter? The godly esteeme vs to be wise; the holy Scriptures pronounce vs to be wise; our reward in time will shew vs to be wise: and shall the reproch of foolish men discourage vs from our wisdom?

Terror for them that corrupt mens soules, and labour with all their might to keepe men from comming to God. It is a blessed calling to be a fisher for God, as *Peter* was, and to catch men with the net of the word: but of all trades it is the worst to fish for Satans turne, and to kill men with the baites of sinne. Therefore is the case of the diuell the most miserable of all creatures, because he hath done more mischief this way than all the rest. And that causeth the Lord so grieuously to threaten the false Prophets that kept men from repentance: and the false Apostles that hindred the worke of the Gospell; and *Elymas*, and any that haue sought to peruert mens hearts, or behauiour. It is not safe to depraue the Ministerie, to weaken the power of it. It is not safe to intice men to Poperie and superstition. It is not safe to perswade men to prophanenesse and neglect of Gods worship. If the naturall Serpent being but a beast was so plagued for being an instrument of Satan vnknowingly, and without desire to bring the woman into sinne; what shall become of them that applie their wit, and tongue, and heart, and whatsoever they can, to doe him seruice herein?

Verse 31. *Behold, the righteous shall be recompensed on earth: how much more the wicked and the sinner?*

THe matter which he is about to speake of, is both certaine and weightie, and such as concerneth euery man to looke to in regard of his owne case; and therefore he prefixeth this word, *Behold*, to moue all to a serious consideration of that which is to be said. And that is first touching the godly, that they must bee corrected for their faults, when they offend, euen in such manner and measure as holdeth some proportion with their offences, though not in equalitie, for then who should be able to abide it? The word *recompense* therefore in this place is not taken for reuengement, or punishment proceeding from Gods indignation,

but a louing chastisement, though it be sharper according to the threatning of parents to their children, whom they be farre from hating, or hurting: I will surely pay you for this. And that it should appeare that nothing is intended against them for the perill of their euerlasting state, there is a limitation annexed, that it is to be only in the earth. Next he sheweth the condition of the wicked, that if the righteous scape not scotfree, they must in no sort be spared, but feele more heauie and fearefull punishments, though not in the earth, yet in the world to come.

Doct.

The best must looke for stripes, if they will take libertie to sin against God. True it is that the Lord taketh not aduantage of infirmities, he passeth by them, he winketh at them, he smireth not his children for them: but when they grow too bold, he wil nurture and awe them with correction. In this sense he may be said to be no respecter of persons, that as he will not endure the sinfulness of the wicked, though they be neuer so great: so hee will not allow of the sinnes of the godly, though they bee neuer so good. The vertues that men haue, doe not warrant them to fall into any vice: their religion and graces doe not priuiledge them to doe those things which are vnseemly for religious and gracious persons to practise. Few points are more fully confirmed by manifest proofes than this. The Scriptures propose many examples, our eares haue heard many reports, our eyes doe daily behold many presidents for this purpose, and they that will not be perswaded by these, shall finde it true by experience in themselves. What dolefull complaints doth the Church make euery where in the Lamentations of Ieremy? Behold, O Lord, how I am

Lam. 1. 18. 20.

troubled: my bowels swell: mine heart is turned within me, for I am full of heavinesse: the Lords sword spoyleth abroad, as death doth at home. The Lord is righteous: for I haue rebelled against his commandement. How lamentably do the godly bemoane themselves, and the state of the Church, in the prophetic of Esaiah? Be not

Isai. 64. 9. 10.

angrie, O Lord, above measure, neither remember iniquitie for euer: loe, we beseech thee behold, we are all thy people. Thine holy cities lie waste: Zion is a wilderness, and Ierusalem a desert. The house of our sanctuary, and of our glorie, where our fathers praised thee, is burnt up with fire, and all our pleasant things are wasted. In what patheti-

call

call manner doth the Prophet expresse the burden of his afflictions, in the booke of the Psalmes? *Thine arrowes haue light upon me, and thine hand lieth upon me. There is nothing sound in my flesh, because of thine anger: neither is there rest in my bones, because of my sinne.* Psal. 38.2.3.

First, God herein respecteth his owne glorie, who will haue his people to know, that he doth looke for seruice at their hands. If they performe it willingly they shall not faile to be rewarded for it: but if they grow carelesse and negligent to obey him, they shall be driuen vnto it by compulsion. This was that which made both *Moses* and *Ieremie* bestirre them, when God shewed his anger to the one, and threatned to destroy the other, for being so backward to vndertake their ministerie: *Exo. 4.14. Ier. 1.17.* And the wicked shall see by this, that hee is neither remisse toward all, nor partiall to any, when his commandement is not regarded. This seemeth to be one cause, why the Prophet that came to Bethel, and failed to fulfill that which was giuen him in charge, was so seuerely handled. He told *Ieroboam*, that God had straightlie forbidden him either to eate or to drinke in that citie, and yet *Ieroboam* might heare that he had both eaten and drunken in the house of an other Prophet there, for which cause the Lord sent a Lion to kil him, that it might be knowne to *Ieroboam* and others, *1. Reg. 13.* how dangerous it was for any to disobey his word.

Secondly, he respecteth their good, though it might seeme to be better for them if they were wholly freed from all manner of troubles and crosses. How wanton, how froward, how stubborne would children be? Into what perils would they cast themselves, if they should be altogether exempted from the rod? They could neuer feeble the comfort of their parents fauour, vnlesse they sometimes found the smart of their displeasure. And so are the stripes and chastisements of God as needfull euery way to all his sonnes and daughters. They make vs the more carefull to beware of euill: they helpe vs to repentance when wee haue fallen into euill: they confirme the loue of our heauenly father towards vs; they be occasions of his holinesse in vs: They bring the quiet fruite of righteousness vnto vs. Finally, to knit vp all in few words: we are therefore recompenced with afflictions in the earth, that we should not be punished with destruction in hell, but rewarded

Reasons. 1.

Heb. 12.6.12.

13.

with euerlasting glorie in heauen. And this the Apostle sheweth to be the cause why God scourgeth vs. *When wee are iudged, saith he, we are chastened of the Lord, that we should not be condemned with the world.*

1. Cor. 11. 32.

Vse. 1.

Admonition to euery one that feareth God, to looke well to his heart and wayes, that he retaine the feare of God constantly, and not be venturous to doe any thing that may offend him. The Lord hateth sinne as well in the godly as in the wicked, and will sooner smite the godly for his sinne, then the wicked, though not so grieuouſlie. An example hereof was alreadie shewne in the Prophet *Isaiah* as he was going from *Bethel*. *Ieroboams* transgressions were begun long before the fault that hee committed, and yet the stroke came vpon him for his fault long before the destruction of *Ieroboam* and his house. And let no man say, I am safe, because I am sure to be saued; he may fall into great miserie in this life, though he be in state of happines for the life to come. Freedome from perdition doth not free men from all manner of punishments. What plague besides destruction can Christians say, we shall certainly escape, vnlesse they bee sure to escape such sinnes as may prouoke God to plague them? The Magistrate hath many punishments for offenders besides death, as the stocks, the goale, the whip, the pillarie, &c. and God hath more iudgements besides damnation, as euery man may heare by the threatenings, and see by the execution, and feelee by the burden of them. *Dauid* was as safe from being condemned, as *Satan* is out of all hope to be redeemed; and yet his calamities made him to groane, and crie, and roare as he saith. His blood was dried vp, his moisture was like the drought of summer. His torment was as great as if his bones had been broken. And as no man should take encouragement by ought that is in himselfe to doe that which is displeasing to the Lord; so is there a care to bee had that wee bee not led by the examples of other men to doe any thing which the word doth not allow. Some hereby take libertie for breach of the Sabbath, some for gaming, some for one thing, some for another. Good men, say they, vse these things, and why then may not wee also? But it is no part of their goodnes, say wee, and then why should you follow them therein at all? Their practise leadeth you to the like facts, but can it preserue you or themselves from the reward

Psal. 32. 4. and
51. 8.

ward thereof? The question is not therefore who they bee that do it, but with what warrant, and how well they are like to speede for their doing.

Consolation in afflictions, that they disable vs not from being righteous, though they be compensations of sinnes for which we are not yet sufficiently humbled. We shall adde to our owne sorrowes, and needlesse increase the weight of our burdens, if wee condemne our state, because the Lord correcteth vs for our faults: if we relinquish our hope of happines in heauen, because we are recompenced with iudgements on earth: it is allotted by God to the best of his seruants so to be dealt with.

How much more, &c. Euery wicked mans state is worse then any godly mans can be. Take the most prosperous of them all, even such as the Prophet speaketh of, *that haue not a knot to their death*, but the web of their life from the wombe to the graue, hath runne with euen threed both in warpe and woofe without any breach, and let him be compared with a Christian that neuer saw merrie day touching outward things, and he shall be found to be a miserable forlorne caraffe, in respect of this poore seruant of God. And indeede the tribulations and afflictions of good men do not bring them behind the wicked, but shew that the plagues and punishments of the wicked are yet behind. That reason our Sauour vsed to the women that lamented him as an vnfortunate man, and one forsaken of God: *Weepe not for me, saith hee, but weepe for your selues, and your children. For if these things be done to a greene tree, what shall be done to the drie?* This reason the Prophet Ieremie vsed to Gentiles bordering vpon Iudah, which thought that plagues had only belonged to the Church. *Loe, I begin to plague theenie, where my name is called vpon, and should you goe free? yee shall not goe quite, for I will call for a sword vpon all the inhabitants of the earth.* saith the Lord of hostes.

Doct.

Luc. 23. 38. 39.

Ierem. 15. 29.

And this reason S. Peter vscth against all impious and sinfull persons: *The time is that iudgement must begin at the house of God. If it first begin at vs, what shall the end bee of them that obey not the Gospell of God? And if the righteous scarcely bee saued, where shall the vngodly and the sinner appeare?*

Pet. 4. 17.

First, the fauour and goodnesse of the Lord doth correct the one part, and that for their greatest good and happines: and his

Reasons. 1.

wrath

wrath and vengeance doth pursue the other, and that for their greatest hurt and miserie.

- 2 Secondly, the death & sufferings of Iesus Christ, haue drunke vp the vengeance and curse of the afflictions of the one part, so that now there is nothing in them, but that which is medicinable and wholesome. And Gods iudgements, with their owne sinfulness haue put a sting into the troubles of the other, so that all that is in them is pestiferous and deadly.

- 3 Thirdly, for the one part, the Lord knoweth what their strength is, and therefore will lay no more vpon them, then they are well able to beare: and for the other, he knoweth what their waies be, and will presse them with as much as they haue deserued.

- 4 Fourthly, the one part vndergoe temporarie tribulations here in earth, and all their sufferings will end with their life: and the other shall suffer eternall paines in hell, and all their torments shall begin at their death.

Vse.

Instruction not to be dis tempered, or discouraged at their insultations ouer vs in our troubles. They clap their hands and make a shout to see vs beaten at our fathers hands, or in the schoole; let them mocke on, and take their course, the officer is at their backe to apprehend them, we shall see them sit in the stocks: we shall see them geiued with bolts vpon their heeles: we shall see them arraigned as malefactors: we shall see them condemned and executed as traytors against the Maiestie of God. And as there is no cause why we should be troubled at their insolencie, so is there no reason why we should be moued at their prosperitie. We should make our selues more miserable then we are, if we should like our owne case the worse, because they deride vs: and we should iudge them more happie then they be, if wee should thinke their state the better, because they applaud themselves. Let vs in compassion pitie the particulars, and pray for them, but neuer esteeme their condition so comfortable, as to wish it for our selues, or to grudge it to them. And because our eyes are much dazeled with externall shewes of things present, the holy Ghost doth giue vs acaueat to take heede of the same: *Fret not thy selfe because of the malitious, neither bee enuious at the wicked. For there shall be none end of plagues to the euill man: the light of the wicked shall be put out.*

Pro. 23. 19. 20.



AN EXPOSITION OF THE TWELFTH CHAP- TER OF THE PROVERBS.

CHAPTER XII.

Verse 1. *He that loveth correction, loveth knowledge: but he that hateth correction, is brutish.*



E that loveth instruction.] Which doth applie himsele to seeke it, by those meanes which are ordained of God for his people to be instructed by, and accepteth and maketh vse of it, when it is offered to him, *he loveth knowledge*, that is, hath it in due estimation, and truly desireth it, and therefore shall also accordingly obtaine it. *But he that hateth correction*, which refuseth all instruction, but especially will not indure to be reprov'd, or corrected, *he is brutish*, a beast in a mans shape, a foole in a high degree of follie, both for an ignorant minde, and rude behaviour, and wretched condition.

Every mans desire of grace and saluation, may be tried by his *Doff. 1.* affection to the meanes thereof. He that is diligent in seeking is willing to finde, as he that setteth himsele to make speede in his way, hath a minde to his iournies end. So the Lord speaketh of the godly in one place of *Isai. 2. 3.* *Isaiah*, that they shall say: *Come, let vs goe vp to the mountaine of the house of the Lord, that he may teach*

Isai. 26. 8. 9.

us his waies, and we may walke in his paths. And so the godly speake to the Lord in another place of Isaiah: The desire of our soule is to thy name, and to the remembrance of thee. With my soule haue I desired thee in the night, and with my spirit within me will I seeke thee in the morning.

Reasons. 1. First, the same spirit that draweth men to liking of the one, doth also worke a loue of the other: for both are wrought by the Holy Ghost.

2 Secondly, all the ordinances of God for mans saluation are contrarie to flesh and blood, and therefore no man can take any delight in them further than hee looketh to the end, and is refreshed with comfortable effects in the way.

3 Thirdly, no man can desire the holy knowledge of God with truth and seruencie, vnlesse he haue had some taste of the fruit of it, and he that hath tasted of the fruit, hath profited by the means, and he that hath profited by the meanes, will loue them euer afterwards. They that finde the comfort of life, haue formerly felt the benefit of food: and they that are desirous to continue their life, are not vnwilling to receiue their foode: and they that hunger after foode for the continuance of life, haue also an appetite to it in regard of the relish.

Vse. 1.

Refutation of their boastings, that goe before all in speaking of their desire and forwardnes to please God, and be saued, and come behinde every one, in shewing any good notes of it. They make their mouthes and not their hearts, the principall seate of their loue: and likewise their words, and not their deedes, their onely arguments doe proue that they doe loue. It is very burdensome for them to liue constantly vnder a faithfull Ministerie. Euerie godly sermon is tedious vnto them: for length, if it bee not ended within the houre: for the manner, if it saour not of humane wit and eloquence: for the matter, if it be wholesome, and liuely, and come home to the rebuking of any sinne, which they are not minded to forsake. And yet they would haue vs all to know, that none are better friends than they to knowledge. And yet they must giue vs leaue againe to tell them, that every friend of knowledge is better affected than they are, to instruction.

2 Consolation to them that thinke it no paines to be painfull in labouring

labouring for the bread of life. They feele not, they ſay, the loue of the word of God, the deſire of faith and care of repentance, &c. But from whence proceedeth that? is it not hence, that they are greedie and couetous of getting abundance of loue and deſire, and therefore they thinke that which they haue to bee nothing, in compariſon of that which they would haue. But theſe men muſt be well confuted: their troubles, their attention, their meditations, their paines, their reading, their queſtions, their conference, their ioy in Chriſtian companie, their diligence in all good exerciſes with willingnes, doth manifeſtly ſhew the error of their doubts and feares. But may not an hypocrite do all theſe things, and yet haue no touch in him? But may an hypocrite doe all theſe things in good earneſt with reſiſtance of hypocrifie? May an hypocrite continue an hypocrite, and yet bewaile his want of ſinceritie in the preſence of God alone, with promiſe, and purpoſe to performe euery ſeruiſe more ſincerely, if poſſibly by any meanes he may be able? It was an argument wherewith *Dauid* confirmed his owne heart in aſſurance that he truly loued the Lord, and vnſainedly ſought his owne ſaluation, becauſe he loued the law of the Lord, meditated in his word and kept his precepts. And *Iob* taketh it for a ſure effect of his vprightnes, that he had not departed from the commandements of Gods lips, but eſteemed the words of his mouth more than his appointed foode.

Is brutiſh, &c. They that will not be ſchooled of God to learne Chriſtian knowledge, are no better than if they had no manner of knowledge. They are not all children that hate this kinde of correction: they are not all naturals: they are not all idiots, but they are all ſtarke fooles. Then many haue been fooles, and yet learned Philoſophers: and many haue been fooles, and yet deep Politicians: and many haue bin fooles, and yet euery way worldly wiſe men. This doth God charge vpon the multitude, the greater number of a whole people: *They are a nation void of counſell, neither is there any vnderſtanding in them. Oh that they were wiſe, then they would vnderſtand this, they would conſider their latter end.* Yea the wittieſt of them are ſo reputed in the prophetic of *Ieremy*: *My people is fooliſh, they haue not knowne me:*

Doct.

Deut. 32. 28.

29.

Ierem. 4. 22.

they are foolish children, and haue none vnderstanding: they are wise to doe euill, but to doe well they haue no knowledge.

Reasons. 1.

First, their carnall wisdome is altogether vn sufficient to make them seruiceable to God, or any thing which they doe to be acceptable vnto him, and it standeth them in no steed for their credit. For those which bee vile in his eyes, shall in time be base in the sight of men: and the punishment of their follie in the end, shall make it appeare they were fooles all the time before. Of this point speaketh the Prophet: *The wise men are ashamed, they are afraide and taken: loe, they haue reiected the word of the Lord, and what wisdome is in them?*

Jerem. 9. 9.

2

Secondly, their carnall wisdome can neither preferue them from death, nor prepare them to die blessedly. It cannot stay their life from going, neither can it stop the curse from comming.

3

Thirdly, it cannot deliuer them from damnation in the world to come, but rather increase the grieuousnes of their punishment. It hath kept possession against this holy vnderstanding: it hath made them vncapable of all good instructions: it hath made them impatient of any rebuke: it hath held them in ignorance and disobedience al their life, and see what their ignorance will bring them vnto after their death: *The Lord Iesus shall shew himselfe from heauen with his mightie Angels in flaming fire, rendering vengeance to them that know not God, and which obey not the Gospell of our Lord Iesus Christ.* Now lay all these things together, and see wherein any man is bettered by any knowledge or wisdome which is ioyned with contempt of grace. Doth hee thinke to please God the better? the more is he offended. Doth he hope to winne credit by it? it will bring him to shame. Would he haue it to keepe him from troubles? it will draw him into them. His death is made the more vncomfortable and bitter, and his destruction following much more horrible and fearfull.

2. Thess. 1. 8.

Vse.

Admonition to take heed that we conforme not our opinions to the iudgement of the world: for that is directly contrarie to the testimonie of God. Carnall reason, and sturdie affections, and vnbrideled tongues say, that they are fooles which will digest reproofes and checks, and suffer themselues to be censured: but the heauenly wisdome and diuine trueth, the sacred Scrip-
tures

tures say, that they are wise which hearken to the rebukes of Gods holy word: and fooles as bad as beasts that despise them. *Ob.* But men will laugh at our simplicitie, if wee sit downe by such indignities. *Resp.* But God will laugh at our miseries if we quarrell with admonitions and counsels when hee vouchsafeth them vn- Prou. 1. 26.
TO VS.

Verse 2. *A good man getteth fauour of the Lord: but a man of wicked imaginations will be condemne.*

A *Good man*, which setteth his heart to deuise of goodnes, and performeth the same in practise, *getteth fauour of the Lord*, that is, inioyeth the assurance and comfort of his louing kindnesse in his soule, and the good effects thereof both in soule and bodie, and euerie other way. *But a man of wicked imaginations, &c.* It is the description of a wicked man by a periphrasis, that he is as it were made of sinfull thoughts, and purposes, and is in the midst of them.

A good man may sometimes haue euill imaginations, as *Dauid* had to destroy the whole house of *Nabal*, but it was the imagination of the man, and he was not a man of such imaginations. *Hee will condemne, &c.* The displeasure of God against him is declared by the effect, hee will conuince him, and find him guiltie, that is, passe sentence vpon him, and cause execution to bee done accordingly. Thus then standeth the opposition: A good man of godly meditations getteth fauour of the Lord, who therefore will saue him: but an euill man of wicked imaginations, incurreth the displeasure of the Lord, who therefore will condemne him.

A man can no way be made so happie as by beeing in Gods fauour. If any other thing were better then this, it would here be named: for his purpose is to promise and performe the best. Doct. 1. Good men doe set their wits on worke to finde the way whereby they may most please him: and hee doth set his wisedome on work to frame a recompence that may best pleasure them.

What account *Dauid* and others made of the fauour of God, is shewed in diuers places of the Psalmes, as when they breake out

Psal. 80. 19.

so earnestly into prayer, and redouble their petition, *Turne vs againe O Lord God of hosts: cause thy face to shine vpon vs, and wee shall be saued.* That is, helpe vs out of our captiuitie: restore vs to the place and meanes of thy worship: let vs feele the testimonies of thy loue, and our state will be blessed and happie. So where the same is acknowledged with thankfulnesse: *Thy louing kindnes is better then life: therefore my lippes shall praise thee.* Neither is this onely *Dauids* testimonie, or feeling, or estimation of Gods loue towards him, but many others haue made such precious account thereof, as that they indured the losse of all their substance, and libertie, and life it selfe, and that with bitter paines and torment, rather then they would doe any thing that might moue the Lord to be angrie with them.

Reasons. 1.

First, in regard of the rarenes of it, it is a flower which groweth only in Gods owne garden. It is a priuiledge and freedome peculiar and proper to the children of God; the Lord neuer giueth good countenance to a wicked person, his anger is euermore towards sinners: whereas in all earthly things, they are commoners with vs, and commonly haue the greater share. It is therefore the more precious, because it is but for few, and those thereby both made and declared to bee excellent, hauing no vnworthie person of their companie to disgrace them.

2

Secondly, in regard of the continuance of it, it is not worne out by time; it vanisheth not away: it is neuer taken from them, vpon whom it is bestowed. Their faults may cause it to bee hid from them for a season (as *Dauid* felt by wofull experience, when he had committed that grieuous sinne of murder and adulterie) but lost it cannot be, nor long concealed: for it will worke in them the grace of humiliation, that they may behold it to their ioy and comfort.

3

Thirdly, in regard of those singular good effects wherewith it is alwaies accompanied; what is desireable here in this world, that it will not yeeld vnto vs? And what happinesse is there in the world to come, that it will not aduance vs vnto?

Psal. 9. 12.

Defence from enemies, and safety from dangers euery creature seeketh after, and this doth Gods goodnesse bring to euery one that is godly. *Thou Lord (saith Dauid) wilt blesse the righteous,*
and

and with fauour wilt compasse him, as with a shield.

Gladnesse of heart and comfort is that which euery man much affecteth, and this the loue and fauour of God doth minister to all those that be partakers of it. And this doth *Dauid* also professe himselfe to haue experience of, and therefore preferreth the louing countenance of the Lord before all the commodities and pleasures which worldly men so much long after. *Many say, who will shew vs any good, but Lord lift vp the light of thy countenance vpon vs. Thou hast giuen me more ioy of heart, then they haue had, when their wheate and their wine did abound.* It is needelesse to reckon vp other things, sithence the sufficiencie of al good things is inferred by these, otherwise there were not so much safetie, neither would there be so great ioy and gladnesse. Psal. 4. 6. 7.

Instruction, that our cheefe care and indeuour be to please the Lord, seeing that so great a benefit proceedeth from it. Euery one of his seruants hath great wages in hand, if hee had nothing else but his Masters good will. It is said of all others that men cannot liue by their faire speeches, and good countenance; but let God looke cheerefully vpon vs, and speake comfortablie to vs, and sure we are that we are in no want. Our present pay is better preferment then any mortall creature can raise vs vp to, though he were the most mightie monarch on the earth, besides all that remaineth for the time to come. especially when wee shall haue so neere access to the presence of our heauenly father, wherein is the fulnesse of ioy; and at whose right hand there are pleasures for euer more. Psal. 16. 11.

Consolation to them that haue receiued vndoubted testimonies of the fauour of God. Blessed are they presently, though men discern not how happie they are made by it: but more blessed shall all the world behold them to be at that great day and glorious appearance of our Lord Iesus Christ. The consideration of the terror that will be at that time, made *S. Paul* himselfe to labour that both in life and death hee might bee acceptable to him, as knowing that most fearefull is their state whom hee shall then be displeased with: and thirfe happie beyond all that mortall mans thought can comprehend, to whom hee then shall declare his kindnes. But in the meane time, say some, they be maligne 2

ligned and molested more then any, and none haue so many enemies as they. But who knoweth whether Gods fauour may not make men fauourable to the? It is said that whe the waies of a man please the Lord, he will make also his enemies at peace with him, *Prov. 16. 7.* Or if they be implacable, and mightie also, yet this is the comfort of the faithfull that God himselfe will ouerliue them, and his might will ouermatch them, and his louing kindnes will bee exercised dailie, as *David* told that bragging *'Doeg;* *Psalm. 52. 1.*

Dott. 2.

The man of wicked imaginations, &c. The Lord doth not onely proceede against the wicked for their vngodly actions, but for sinnefull thoughts and purposes. But the prosecution of this point we reserue for the sixe and twentieth verse of the fiftenth chapter, where it is said that the thoughts of the wicked are abomination to the Lord.

Verse 3. A man cannot bee established by wickednes; but the roote of the righteous cannot be moued.

SInsulnesse may seeme to serue a mans turne, but in the ende it shall appeare it neuer did him good. For howsoeuer it is an occasion of lifting many men vp on hie in prosperity, yet it giueth them no sure footing in their state, but downe they fall, and then it had been better for them to haue stood still on the ground. Wicked men often grow greater, and faster then others, but their setting is not so fast and firme, as the other part sheweth. The righteous though they be not so tall and spreading vpwards, yet they take roote the stronger downwards: and though their boughes be shaken aboue, yet that will not loosen his hold beneath. This is the opposition, The vngodly shall not be established by wickednes, but his roote shall be plucked vp; but the righteous shall be established by godlines, and his roote shall not be moued.

Dott. 1.

They shall misse of their expectation that hope to succour themselves by sinning. They applie a venomous plaister to their sore: they drinke strong poison for a medicine: and they prop vp their rooffe with burning firebrands. But the holy Ghost directeth

recteth every one of vs to a course directly contrarie to this in the booke of Iob: *If iniquitie be in thine hand, put it farre away, and let Iob 11. 14. no wickednesse dwell in thy tabernacle. Then truly shalt thou lift vp thy face without spot, and shalt be stable, and shalt not feare.* And he doth indent with them whom hee will deliuer from death and miserie, that they shall confesse that their wickednes could stand them in no steed: *If one say, I haue sinned, and peruerked righteousness, and it did not profit me, he will deliuer his soule from going into the pit, and his life shall see the light, Iob 33. 27. 28.*

Saul dealt very foolishly in vndermining the foundation of his house by disobedience, and the seeking to hold it vp by persecuting of *Dauid*: And *Ieroboam* dealt not wisely, who (when 1. Reg. 11. 38. the Lord promised to build him a sure house, as he built to *Dauid*, if he would keepe his statutes and commandements, as *Dauid* did) deuised another trick to confirme the kingdome to himselfe and his posteritie, and that was by setting vp the idolatrous Calues at Dan and Bethel.

First, it is the very proper effect of sinne to procure ruine, and *Reasons. 1.* to bring men to a downfall. And thereupon the Prophet *Hosea* doth ground his exhortation: *O Israel returne vnto the Lord thy God: for thou hast fallen by thine iniquitie, Hos. 14. 2.* As if he should haue said, Let experience make you wise: neuer trust to sin any more, but seeke vnto God: for looke what successe you finde by your euill waies now, the same be sure of euer: no man can speed by such a bad meanes.

Secondly, the rising, standing, and falling of euery man is in Gods owne hand, who alone setteth vp, and confirmeth, and casteth downe at his will. And how then can sinne yeeld any stabilitie to sinners, which haue his wrath, and threatnings, and oth, and hand against them? It cannot draw kindnes from him, to asfist them in fauour. Force will be of no force to compell to it by feare. And wisedome makes it impossible to intice him to it by craft.

Thirdly, if men might haue establishment by wickednes, many absurd and dangerous consequents would follow vpon it. The curses of the Law would be of small effect: the most sinfull shifters would make their state the surest: and Saran should be-

come their beneficiall friend, whose soules are most peruerbed by him.

Vjs.

Instruction, that forasmuch as we may know that we shall lose our labour in seeking any sinfull helps, that Gods displeasure will be increased, our miserie increased, our guiltinesse increased, and euery thing increased that may increase our sorow and torment, that therefore henceforth we deceiue our selues no more, in expecting helpe at that which altogether turneth to our hurt. We would all stand as firme, and as impregnable castles, but wee make a quicke sand our foundation, and mudde walles our stone worke, and flubble and reedes our strongest timber. It would grow to a large volume if we should relate the seuerall kindes of finnes whereby we haue sought to serue our owne turnes, as falsehood in word by lying, falsehood in deed by stealing, and deceitfulness of diuers sorts, flatterie, couetousnes, crueltie, hypocrisie, running to witches: and what not? But many volumes are not able to containe the particular facts whereof wee stand guiltie, only Gods book, and that of our own conscience are capacious enough for them. And therefore it is time for vs to pull downe our owne ruinous building, lest it fall downe vpon our heads, and make vs fall downe to destruction. For though it bee too slight, and as weake as a cobweb to bee a couert ouer vs, yet it is very heauie, and as weightie as a mountaine to presse vs vnder it. Let vs seriously consider, that whatsoeuer is offensive to God cannot be defensiu for vs, and that which doth bring any perill to the soule, can neuer possibly bring safetie to state or bodie. Away then from our own deuices, from all fleshly and vnlawful meanes of helpe, and let vs runne with speede to him that neuer failed to succour any that vnfaignedly sought helpe at his hands. And this may be our encouragement hereunto, that wee goe not vnsent, nor come vnbidden. His owne will, his owne word calleth vpon vs with many promises for that purpose: *If thou returne to the Almighty, thou shalt be built vp, and thou shalt put iniquitie farre from thy tabernacle. The Almighty shall be thy defence, and thou shalt haue plentie of siluer. When others are cast downe, thou shalt say, I am lifted vp: and God shall saue the humble person: Iob. 22. 23.*

25. 29.

Verse

Verse 4. *A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband: but she that maketh him ashamed is a rottennes in his bones.*

A *Vertuous woman*, which feareth God, and loueth her husband, and is faithful in her calling, *is a crowne to her husband*, she is for his honour and credit, and consequently for his profit and comfort. *But she that maketh him ashamed*, which either by her lewdnes, and rudenes doth bring him into contempt, or at least maketh him to hold downe his head, or by negligence, pride, and wastfulnes doth weaken his estate, and bringeth him to want, *she is a rottennes in his bones*, that is, a torment and corrasieue to his heart, as grievous as the ach of the bones, or corruption of the marrow, which is more painfull and incurable than an vlcere in the flesh. The antithesis is thus: A vertuous woman is the crowne of her husband, and so a great ioy and gladnes to his heart: but a vicious woman is a shame to her husband, and as a rottennes in his bones.

No outward thing in all the world is better than a good wife. *Doct.* It is not so well with a rich man that hath his house store with abundance of wealth, as with a poore man that hath his house garnished with a Christian wife, so that hee be also a godly man, and a faithfull husband. By this meanes hee may be made conspicuous, though his state and degree were otherwise obscure: and it is lawfull in this sort, for a meane subiect, without disloyaltie to his Prince, to weare a crowne of good reputation and credit. If the valew and brightnes of pearles and precious stones draw mens eyes to behold them that possesse and weare them, much more will this rich iewell, whose price and beaultie exceedeth the best of them. For God himselfe who seeth euery sort of them, and euery one of them, and knoweth their seuerall worths, and hath made them all, hee setteth a gracious wife at an higher rate than any of them, and saith, *that her price is farre aboue Carbuncles.* *Prou. 31.10.*

First, they are very scarce and hard to come by, and therefore it is said, *Who shall finde a vertuous woman?* There are incomparably more wiues than God will praise for good wiues, and more

Reasons. 1.
Prou. 31.10.

maides and widowes than hee will commend to good men to match with. As therefore those that are gracious are rare, so are they also the more remarkable, and so they more adorne their husbands. If crownes were as commonly worne as hats, men would esteeme of hats as much as of crownes.

2
Prou. 18. 22.

Secondly, good wiues to godly men are all of the Lords providing, he made the match in mercie and fauour, and therefore the more to be regarded. He more immediatly declareth his loue in this, than in bestowing lands and liuings, or any other goods or substance. So saith this Scripture: *House and riches are the inheritance of the fathers: but a prudent wife commeth of the Lord:* Prou. 19. 14.

3 Thirdly, man hath more interest in his wife, than he can haue in any other creature. She is appropriated to him with neereſt bonds of vnion. She is not so properly called his, as a part of him, and one flesh with him. As the two parts of man, soule and body make one person; so two persons, man and woman, make one matrimoniall bodie. Then how should he not take comfort in her graces and gifts, which are made his owne together with her?

4 Fourthly, the benefits which a vertuous wife doth bring to a worthy husband, are manifold, and worthie to be regarded. She will labour to refresh his heart with comfort, and to preserue his bodie in health: she will be a helper for his familie, and provident for his state: she will be tender of his credite, and cheerefull to his friends: she will euery way applie herselfe to shew her loue, and procure his best prosperitie. These we shall handle particularlie in the one and thirtie chapter, if God permit vs to proceede so farre. Contrarie to the waies of this good woman is the behaviour of a bad wife, who worketh both shame and griefe to her husband. All her sinfulness maketh him ashamed, vnlesse hee bee shamelesse, which is his greater shame. A wicked sonne is a blot to his father, and a disordered seruant is no credit to his maister, and therefore much more doth an vngodly wife disgrace and blemish her yoke-fellow. And as she putteth matter of talk into other mens mouthes, so she laieth burdens vpon his backe, and powreth sorrowes into his heart by contempt, and wrongs, and indignities.

indignities. Oh the calamitie of them that are put to harbour their enemies harlots in their owne beds, and bosoms ! And what a miserie is it for a man to commit the greatest part of his substance to her that is a priuie theefe, whereby shee hath all before her, to choose what shee will to rob him of ! And hard is their case whose wiues are meere spies to know, and discouer, and publish abroad their secrets, and fautes, and infirmities to their great reproach. And what shall wee speake of such as are swinish with drunkennesse ? and of gadders, and busie bodies abroad ? which in all contentions are alwaies parties, and wheresoeuer they come, they raise contentions ? What comfort doe these women minifter to their husbands that loue peace, and sobrietie ? As for such as are turbulent in their owne houses, and froward, and rebellious against their head, the spirit of God telleth vs, what profitable, pleasant, and amiable companions they be. In the nineteenth chapter of this booke it is said, that *the contentions of a wife are like a continuall dropping.* Consider what vexation it is for a man to haue raine falling fast vpon his head, and bodie, especially if there be no intermission that he may drie himselfe againe: and most of all if it be through the roose of his house to rot his timber, and spoile his stufte, and take away the comfort of his meate and rest: when at bed and boord, and euery where, hee shall be as it were vnder a running spout. And elsewhere he affirmeth, that *it is better to dwell in a corner of the house top,* (that is on a pinnacle vpon the top of the house without) *then with a contentious woman in a wide house.* And yet more in the same chapter, that *it is better to dwell in the wildernesse among wild beasts, then with a contentious and angrie woman.* Prou 19, 13.

Instruction to such as be vnmarried to haue principall respect of vertue and grace in their choice. As for parentage, personage, portion, and other things of like nature, let them be regarded, if they waite vpon religion, and pietie, otherwise suffer them not to put wiues vpon you, or rather presse sorrow, and shame vpon you, as many feele to their woe, which onely looke to outward things.

2. To such as are married, if God hath vouchsafed them that mercie to giue them vertuous women, let them both giue him the

Pro. 31. 29-31.

Col. 3. 19.

praise, and take the comfort to themselves, whether they bee rich or poore, and vse all good vsage and encouragement to such good yokefellowes. A iust testimonie and commendations of them, and sometimes vnto them, sufficient allowance both of libertie and maintenance, according to their husbands abilitie, is due vnto them, in equitie and iustice. But whatsoeuer their abilitie is, they are able to shew kindnesse, and good countenance to them, and that must not be wanting. Saint *Paul* would haue husbands to loue their wiues therfore, because they are wiues, and to be bitter to none, much lesse to be fierce, and churlish, and boisterous to them that are good. But if they bee yoked with those of the other sort, their miserie is a good motiue to send them to God to seeke his helpe, and more to labour to please him themselves, that he may make their wiues to be better vnto them. For if it be in his hand before marriage to make them godly, and to prepare them for his seruants, it is as much also in his power to conuert them afterwards: which if he doe not, yet they shall haue more strength to beare the burden with greater ease.

2 Reproofe of their sinne and follie, that like nothing lesse, nor labour against any thing so much as to haue their wiues to be religious and godly. They more hate pietie and grace, then they loue beautie and wealth, and would sooner chuse one of no substance, then of great goodnes. But indeede they are not driuen to that extremity, it is no difficult matter to many that haue great riches, to be of little sanctification, and therefore they haue their desires double satisfied in getting wealth & wickednes together. How many doe we daily see that withhold their wiues from all good means of godlines: that dissuade them, discourage them, and sometimes by strong hand restrain them from comming to the preaching of Gods holy word, whereby their soules might be instructed? How many teach their wiues pride, and straine themselves beyond their abilitie to maintaine them in garishnes? How many doe bring their wiues into such company, and to such exercises, as infect their eyes, and eares, and tongues, and heart, and euery sense with lust and wantonnesse? Is it not righteous from God that these husbands should bee plagued with the la-
uishes,

uishnes, and stubbernesse, and whorishnesse of their wiues, which haue so poysoned their soules, and drawne them to such lewde and sinfull behauiour?

Verse 5. The thoughts of the iust are right: but the counsels of the wicked are deceit.

Godly men are not altogether void of thoughts, that are not right and allowable: sometimes Sathan catcheth in matter to turne them out of the right course: sometimes their owne flesh will play it part, and stirre vp desires of commoditie and praise, and pleasures and such like in them; but these are as the muddines that may be for a time in a good fountaine that is troubled: these they allow not: these they resist, and iudge themselves for, and therefore God taketh notice only of those that are good, tending to his seruice, and glorie, their owne saluation, and the benefite of their brethren. On the other side, *the counsels of the wicked*, that is, their deuises, plots, and purposes in themselves (for they are here rather the worke of the mind, then of the tongue, and opposed to the thoughts of the godly) are deceit, tending either to the circunvention, and wronging of others, or to the cloaking and hiding of their owne sinfulness.

The godly differ as much from the wicked in inward cogitations and purposes, as in outward conuersation and practise. At the first creation man was made to excell the brute beasts more by the reason and gifts of the soule, then by the fashion and shape of the bodie: and at the second, a Christian is made to excell sinfull men more by the holiness and working of the soule, then by the actions and workes of the bodie. This caused the Apostle *S. Paul* to vrge the Ephesians with so earnest an asseueration and attestation, that hereby they should cleere their regeneration vnfalshlie, and put it out of all doubt and question. *This I say, and* Ephes. 4. 17. *testifie in the Lord, that yee henceforth walke not as other Gentiles walke in vanitie of their mind, hauing their cogitations darkned, &c. And* *Isaiah* commeth to speake of some specials, and sheweth what a contrarietie there is betweene their thoughts and meditations. *The heart, saith he, of the nigard will worke iniquitie, he denieth*

wiseth euill counsels to vndoe the poore with lying words: but the liberall man will deuise of liberall things, and will continue his liberality, Isa. 32.6.7.8.

Reasons. 1.

First, the one sort are led by the word and spirit of God, and therefore will thinke of such things as they worke in them, and perswade them vnto: the other are led by the flesh, and Sathan, and therefore will thinke of such things as they suggest.

2

Secondly, the hearts of the one are replenished with Christian loue, and therefore they will meditate how they may best exercise it in doing good: and the other are posselt with selfe-loue, and they will deuise how they may serue their owne turnes though with neuer so much hurt and mischief.

3

Thirdly, the treasures of the one are in heauen, and therefore their hearts are there, and their thoughts are taken vp about heauenly things; and the happines of the other is in earth, and sinne, and therefore they are alwaies pondring of earthly and sinfull matters.

4

Fourthly, the heart and purpose is the roote from whence the actions spring and receiue their life, and therefore good men could not performe so many good seruices, and haue them so well accepted of God, and the wicked would not fall into so many soule sinnes, and be so much hated of him, vnlesse they had contrarie mindes and affections, the godly holy and righteous, and the wicked impious and deceitfull.

Vse. 1.

Instruction to examine and trie the state of our soules by this rule, let vs consider not onely what we haue done, and how men conceiue of vs, but with what mind wee haue performed euery good dutie, and how the Lord doth esteeme of vs. He trieth the raines, he searcheth the heart, hee looketh vpon the purposes, and desires. That which no creature seeth or taketh knowledge of, he praiseth, and rewardeth: that which the world admireth and magnifieth, he hateth and abhorreth. So our Sauour told the Pharises, *Yee are they which iustifie your selues before men: but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.*

Luk. 16. 15.

2

Reproofe of them that turne their hearts loose, permitting their thoughts to straggle whithersoever they will at their pleasure, and

and thinke it safe to satisfie themselves in filthie lusts, in proud imaginations, in bitter grudgings, and in diuers idle, vaine, and foolish conceits. It is accounted by many for a part of mans libertie that thought is free: but they that take that libertie are brought into the most grievous struitude, to become slaues and bondmen to those free thoughts. Now if deceifull counsels conuince men to bee euill, as the Scripture saith they doe, what can the Papists say for themselves, why they should be reputed good? Did euer any kinde of people lay their plots for greater mischiefes? Did euer any seeke to act their purposes with greater falsehood and treacherie? What fidelitie is to bee found in their words, in their protestations, in their solemne oathes? They say many things, which the purpose of not doing them is the cause why they say them. Then they pretend the most obedience, when they intend the greatest disobedience: and looke for some notable disloyaltie from them, when they are readie to sweare to be loyall.

Verse 6. *The talking of the wicked is to lie in waite for blood: but the mouth of the righteous will deliuer them.*

THese words are not to be vnderstood to meane all sorts of wicked men, but such as are malicious; and their speeches too, of such as they maligne, doe principally tend to the insnaring and catching of them, and that to their destruction, so farre as they can effect it: if not by violence vpon their bodies to the taking away of their liues, yet by oppression otherwise to the quine of their estate. Now the contrarie is to bee found in the godly, who vse their lips, as much as in them is, to succour such as the wicked lie in waite for; either as *Pauls* nephew did, by discovering the practises against them, or being suiters for them, or cleering their innocencie. And this is spoken of their endeouour, and not of the euent, for that is many times otherwise.

Lie in waite, &c. It is the propertie of violent men to mixe their *Doff. 1.* cruelty with craftinesse.

Their tongues worke as well as their hands, and their hearts and heads giue direction to their tongues: and hands, and
S
tongues,

Psal. 10. 9. 10.

tongues, and hearts, and heads doe all conspire and combine themselves against poore innocents. Such the Prophet complaineth of in the Psalmes: *He lieth in waite secretly, euen as a lion in his denne: he lieth in waite to spoile the poore: he doth spoile the poore, when he draweth him into his net. He croucheth and boweth: and therefore heapes of the poore doe fall by his might.*

Luk. 22. 31.

Amos 7. 10.

Many deuices deceitfull tongues haue, to bring their purposes to passe. Sometimes by flatterie, or otherwise to draw aduantages from him whom they practise against, according as our Sauiour was sundrie times dealt with. Sometimes by incensing, or perswading others, whose displeasure and power may worke that which themselves could neuer effect, as *Human* did, and *Amaziah*, and *Danijel* aduersaries also, though in another manner: *Dan. 6.* Sometimes by taking opportunitie of the time, when it serueth them, as *Doeg* did against the Priests, when *Saul* himselfe was offended with *Jonathan*, for fauouring *Dauid*. Who can reckon all when there are so many, and euery day new inuentions of moe?

Reasons. 1.

First, the diuell is their director, and teacheth them what course to take, and all the world knoweth and feeleth that hee is both, fierce and subtrill, being a bloodie red dragon for crueltie, and hauing seuen heads for craft.

2

Secondly, their owne studie and exercise hath made them expert and skilfull in their hellish trade: and the taste of blood hath made them as hungrie as hounds after it.

Vse.

Instruction to auoide as much as wee may, both conuersation and conference with them. Of receiuing harme, we stand in great perill; of effecting good, we can haue little expectation. It is no hard matter for the foxe or lion to make the lambe to feele their wilnesse or violence: but it is not easie for the lambe to teach the lion, or foxe, his innocencie.

Doct. 2.

But the mouth &c. It is a note of a good man to haue his good word readie to helpe them that are oppressed.

There be many that refraine from traducing, accusing, and intrapping their neighbours, which yet goe not farre enough to shew themselves mercifull and righteous: there are many that will speake in the praise of godly men, free from troubles and molestia-

molestations, and yet declare not sufficient loue to God and his people : but here is loue, here is courage, here is faithfulness, here-
 in they make it appeare that they are not accepters of persons,
 when they apply their wits, and tongues, and countenance in
 their places, for the defence of harmelesse men that are helpelesse.
 In this sense doth the Holy Ghost call vpon men in the foure and
 twentieth chapter : *Deliver them that are drawne to death : and wilt* Prou. 24. 11.
not thou preserve them that are led to be slaine?

First, they are the members of our owne bodie, and therefore Reasons. I
 their communion and neerenesse with vs, should moue vs to it.
 Who would not open his lips for a father, or brother, or friend,
 (as did that faithfull *Jonathan*) but chiefly for himselfe? Who
 would not doe his best to shew the equitie of his owne cause?
 Who would not intreate hard to saue his owne head, or hand, or
 foote, or any other part of him? So doe all good men that deale
 in the behalfe of any iust and righteous person, the case is their
 owne.

Secondly, they are the members of Christ who is head to vs, 2
 and therefore since he spared not to speake, and suffer for vs: since
 he prayed, and pleaded, and payed euen his owne life and natu-
 rall bodie for our deliuerance, is it much for vs to bestow our
 words, or to beare a rebuke to deliuer those that haue a place in
 his mysticall bodie?

Thirdly, it is the way to prouide helpe from God, and good 3
 men, against our owne troubles, to be helpfull to others in theirs:
 and the contrarie befalleth them that are slacke and remisse in
 this dutie.

Fourthly, we doe after a sort make our selues accessarie to the 4
 wrongs and iniuries which are offered to the righteous, when
 they either come vpon them by our negligence, or fearefulness.

Instruction for euery degree to be diligent and carefull in the Vse. I.
 performance of this dutie. Art thou a Magistrate? Remember
 what lesson *Salomons* mother bestowed vpon him : *Open thy*
mouth for the dumbe in the cause of all the children of destruction. Prou. 31. 8. 9.
Open thy mouth : iudge righteously, and iudge the afflicted, and the
poore. Art thou a priuate man, yet thou maist giue aduice, or te-
 stifie the truth, or solícite friends, or at least thou maist call vpon

God for them that bee pursued by oppressors.

2

Consolation to all good patrones of poore distressed mens causes; which take to heart their wrongs and burthens, and seeke reliefe and remedie for them. They would not so faithfully labour for righteousness, vnlesse themselves were righteous: they could not shew such pitie to good men, vnlesse they loued goodnesse, and God loued them: for effectuall compassion and mercie is neuer found in any that is not vnder mercie. 2. To them that haue enemies lying in waite for their blood; if they be innocent and godly, the Lord will stirre them vp friends, that will fauour their cause, and stand in their defence. Some *Iob* or other wil deliuer them, though they be poore and fatherlesse, and haue none to helpe them. Or if there be none that fauour them at the bench, yet there be that will obtaine fauour for them from heauen. The prayers of Gods people ascend vp. to Gods presence for his helpe: and those mouthes preuaile mightily that seeke for redresse of wrongs at his hands. *Herod* thought that it would be too late for all the friends which *Peter* had to minister helpe vnto him when hee had clapt him vp in so sure a prison. But hee remembered not how swift the godly be to prayer: and how soone a prayer can come to God: and in what readines God hath his Angels: and what speede an Angell can make to succour them that are in danger. Yet this is not the greatest comfort of Gods afflicted seruants, but this that the Lord Iesus Christ is infinitely more righteous and mercifull than any man, or all men possible can be, and he will vndertake their cause, and either minister help to their state, or grace to their soules, to beare their troubles, till the fittest time of freedome from them. He will preserue them from sinne and Satan which lie in waite for their eternall destruction. The spirit of God is large in one of the Psalmes in setting forth the tender care which he hath of his people: *He shall deliuer the poore when he crieth: the needie also, and him that hath no helpe. He shall be mercifull to the poore and needie, and shall preserue the soules of the poore. He shall redeeme their soules from deceit and violence, and deare shall their blood be in his sight: Psal. 72. 12. 13. 14.*

Iob 19. 12.

Verse 7. *God overthroweth the wicked, and they are not: but the house of the righteous shall stand.*

WHen the state of the vngodly which are not Gods chosen, changeth from prosperitie to aduersitie, it seldome staith, till they be utterly destroyed, both themselves, & their houses; This word, *are not*, signifieth a slaughter and killing, as it is spoken of the murdering of the infants by *Herod*, Mar. 2. 18. Jer. 31. 15. But here is more vnderstood, than the losse of naturall life, and that is, the perdition of soule and bodie. And yet not the extinction of either: for the soule shall neuer vanish away, nor the bodie for euer: they shall not finde so much mercie at Gods hands. Their being shall not cease, but their comfortable and well being. They shall be euermore, euermore to beare the burden of Gods wrath, and to suffer the vsufferable torment of death and damnation. *But the house of the righteous*, that is, he, and those things which appertaine vnto him, shall bee preserved from being overthrowne to ruine.

They that will not keepe themselves from wickednesse, cannot keepe themselves from desolation. *Doff.*

They may rise, but not stand: for, ylesse they fall to repentance, they shall be made to fall to destruction. They may grow great, but for a small time, for they will soone bee brought to nothing.

The prophet thought too well of their state at y first, as though they had bin in better case then any other men: but he conceived as hardy of it at the last, when he had seene their end in the sanctuary, and deemed them of all to bee most miserable. *Surelie*, saith he to the Lord, *thou hast set them in slipperie places, and castest them downe into desolation. How suddenlie are they destroyed perished, and horrible consumed!* The Scriptures flow with testimonies and similies to declare both the certaintie, and suddennesse, and grievousnesse of their decay; as the withering of plants, the putting out of lights, the vanity of dreames, the vanishing of smoake, and many others to the like purpose.

First, they haue all the threatnings of God against them: and *Reasons. 1.* every

euery threatening sendeth forth many curses: and euery curse bringeth many plagues.

- 2 Secondly, their owne deserts; which in respect of any creature are infinite, doe draw vpon them iudgements and miseries that are inexplicable.

- 3 Thirdly, the loue and trueth of God to his owne seruants, will not permit a perpetuall prosperitie to his enemies. By this hee perswadeth them not to faint in their owne afflictions, because a reward remaineth for them, and their end will be peace. By this he perswadeth them not to fret at wicked mens successes, because there remaine punishments for them, & their end is to be cut off.

Psal. 37. 38.

Vse. 1.

Admonition to sinfull men, to tender their loue more than pitie them and desire that their case may be better. If others tremble at their fall that is comming, which yet neither feelee the paine nor be in the perill thereof, is it wisdome for them to cast off all care of themselues, and onely picke quarrels against them that seeke their safetie? When their wound is incurable they will wish that they had better regarded the plaister, and the hand that applied it. When the disease is remediless, they will rue the reiection of the medicine, and physition. When hell shall haue them in hold, they will bewaile the refusall of their friendship that would haue directed them to heauen. It was good counsell of *Philip*, and well followed of *Nathaniel*, when hee perswaded him to come, and see whether Iesus were not the Christ. And it was an indulgence of Christ to *Thomas*, to helpe his faith in his resurrection, by the senses of sight and feeling: but for matters of punishment, and damnation, it is good to goe from them, and not to come at them: to heare Gods testimonie, and not to see it fulfilled vpon themselues: to beleue the trueth of that which is spoken, and not to feelee it by their owne experience.

Ioh. 1. 46.

Ioh. 20. 27.

- 2 Consolation, that sinfull men shall not alwaies be molesters of the godly, because they shall not alwaies be. They shall not continually ouershadoue the faithfull, because they shall not stand continually. Though their shew bee great now, and terrible to Gods people, yet their change will bee greater, and fearefull to themselues. He will speedilie ouerturne them, and all their power of hurting shall be taken from them. Now their rootes are

low,

low, their toppes aloft, and branches broad, and thereby ouer-droppe all that is ynder them: then must their toppes come downe, and rootes rise vp, and all their branches wither. Now they are vessels that are full of power, and wealth, and malice: but then must bee there a transposition: the bottome must bee vppward, and the brimmes must bee downeward, and all their fullnesse be shed on the ground like water. The ground of this comfort is neither vaine, nor weake: for God himselfe doth vrge it as a forcible reason to confirme the hearts of his people. *Feare thou not* (saith hee) *for I am with thee: bee not affraide, for I am thy God. Behold, all they that prouoke thee shall bee ashamed and confounded; they shall be as nothing, and they that strue with thee shall perish. Thou shalt seeke them, and shalt not finde them: to wit, the men of thy strife, for they shall be as nothing, and the men that warre against thee, as a thing of nought: Isai. 41. 11. 12.*

For the firmenes of the righteous man, and of his house, see chapter the tenth, verf. 2. 25.

Verse 8. *A man shall bee commended according to his wisdom: but the froward in heart shall be despised.*

AS eüery one is more wise and godly, so shall hee haue more true praise and honour: Sometimes, and very often the wicked shall commend him, commonly the righteous, and alwaies the Lord himselfe, but most of all at the last day, before all men, and Angels, as our Sauour telleth vs in the fiue and twentieth of Matthew. Contrariwise *the froward in heart*, such whose hearts reiect all good instructions, and graces, shall bee despised, and brought to contempt among men in this life, or their faults breake out after they are dead, or bee manifested before all the world at the day of the Lord. This is the opposition: Hee that is vpright of heart shall be commended for his wisdom: but hee that is froward of heart, shall be despised for his follie.

They that are not voide of vprightnesse and wisdom, shall *Doct.* not be destitute of praise and honour.

Though some be blind that they cannot discern of their vnderstanding and graces, yet others haue their eie-sight, and behold:

hold them. Though some be dumbe, and will not speake of their vertues, yet others haue their lippes opened to commend them. Though some be malicious to carpe at, and deprauethem, yet others be faithfull to giue them their due testimonie. Neither is it a thing incident to some few, as though it belonged ouelie to principall men and great personages, but to all of every place that are therewith qualified, both hie and low, both puissant potentates, and meane bondmen and seruants. There is no exception, or limitation of degrees, when it is said, that *the wisdom of a man doth make his face to shine*. And seruants could not adorne the doctrine of God, if grace and godlinesse did not also adorne and beautifie them.

Ecl. 8. 1.

Tit. 2. 10.

Reasons. 1.

First, God himselfe testifieth for them, and that is sufficient for their commendation: for hee is not allowed that praiseth himselfe, nor whom the world praiseth, but which is praised of the Lord.

2 Secondly, he hath all mens hearts and tongues in his hands to make them to thinke well and speake well of those whom hee would haue to be in credit. He appointed that cursing *Balaam* to speake for his people, and blesse them, when he came of purpose to cast out imprecations against them. He compelled *Saul* with his lippes to cleere *David*, and to pronounce him iust and innocent, when he had his weapons in a readines to punish him as a rebell.

3 Thirdly, their owne amiable and louelie behauiour allureth the liking of men towards them, and obtaineth their good testimonie of them. *This wisdom that is from above*, this heavenly wisdom which the spirit of God worketh, is *first pure, then peaceable, gentle, easie to be intreated, full of mercie and good fruits, without iudging, and without hypocrisie*. The sight of these graces, the very report of them doth winne mens hearts, and draw their affections to those that exercise them, and much more when they feeble the fruite and benefit thereof to themselves.

Iam. 3. 17.

Now where wisdom is wanting, and follie is flowing; where meekenesse is a stranger, and frowardnesse a commander, what is to be looked for, but reproach and contempt? Are the poorest seruants and handmaidens commended on the other side? then the

the wealthieft Lords and Mafters are defpifed on this fide. Doth the Lord praife all fuch as be godly wife? then doth he difgrace all thofe that be finfully foolifh. Doth hee deriue mens testimonies and fauours to thofe? then will he draine and draw them away from thefe. Is foft, and gentle, and mercifull behauiour a meanes to procure the good will of men? then fowre, and churlifh, and cruell demeanour, will prouoke their offence and difpleafure. Generally, that which God fpake concerning *Elias* houfe, holdeth true to all of both forts: *Them that honour me, I will honour, and they that defpife me, fhall be defpifed.* 1. Sam. 2. 30.

Reproofe of them that loue nothing fo much as praife: for they are as defirous of it as Pharifies; and yet nothing leffe than wifedome, nor praife any thing fo much as follie. Doe they thinke that the dunghill of wickedneffe is a fit mine to digge honour and credit out of? Doe they thinke that the puddle water of pride, and wantonnes, and vanitie, will make them beautifull to the eyes of men of vnderftanding? Doe they thinke that the filth comming out of the finke of quaffing, and gaming, and swearing, and finfull exercifes will fend out a sweete fauour of reuerend eftimation? Nay, their kind friend follie hath much abused them, and yet for her fake they will ftill illude themfelues alfo. Good men pitie them, and bad men deride them, the tongues of moft defpife them, the hearts of all condemne them. *Yfe. 1.*

Consolation to them vpon whom the Lord hath multiplied the gifts of Chriftian knowledge and wifedome. Though all countenance fhould feeke to difcountenance them: though all wits fhould fet themfelues on worke to inuent their difgrace: though all tongues fhould be sharpened to cut downe their credit: though all the vngodly Oratours in the world fhould be turned into one *Tertullus* againft them, yet they fhould nothing preuaile: the praife that God putteth on, they cannot pluck off: they may as well ftay the ftarres and planets from fhining, as take away the brightneffe of grace and wifedome. 2

Verse 9. *He that is despised, and is his owne seruant, is better than he that boasteth himselfe, and lacketh bread.*

HE that is despised, that is of meane estate, for which the foolish proud worldlings commonly haue men in contempt, and is his owne seruant, that is, industrious and diligent by labour to provide himselfe of things that bee needfull, (and so euer they may truly be called their owne seruants, that are faithfull in another mans seruice) *is better than he that boasteth himselfe, that is, which standeth vpon his reputation, and yet lacketh bread, hath little or nothing to maintaine himselfe withall: for bread is put here for all manner of necessarie prouision.*

Doct.

They deale with best discretion that yeeld themselues to a low state when God calleth them to it.

It is the propertie of fooles either to rage at pouertie when it commeth vpon them, or to brag against it, or to fall down vnder it: whereas wise men will beare it with patience, and stoope to it in humilitie, and yet resist it with great diligence. It was a grace that the Scripture commendeth in *Iacob*, that notwithstanding the honour and worthinesse of his father *Isaack*, and grandfather *Abraham*, yet when he could no longer bee in safetie from his brother *Esau*, in his fathers house, he betooke himselfe to bee an hireling to his vnckle *Laban* in another country. It was a vertue very eminent in *Moses*, that being trained vp in his youth like a Prince in the Court of a great King, he could debase himselfe in his middle age to be a shepheard to a stranger of farre inferiour place and degree. And it was the praise of *Naomi* that when she was a rich wife and full, she could thankfully vse her wealth and fulnes: but when she was growen to be a poore widow and emptie, she would take state no longer vpon her, but laid downe all titles, to her very name whereby she was called.

Ruth 1. ac. 21.

Reasons. 1.

First, it testifieth the lowlinesse of a mans heart, to submit himselfe to Gods hand, when he can debase himselfe, as he hath debased him; and the contrarie argueth pride and stubbornnes, when they will stand higher than he will haue them.

Secondly,

Secondly, they may comfortably repaire to God for supplie of their wants and blessing, when they serue his providence, and disdaine not to be seruiceable in a calling, whereas the others refusing to yeeld obedience to him, can haue small hope to be accepted of him.

Thirdly, they that applie themselves to labour for their liuings, doe eat their owne bread, and are profitable to others; whereas those stately idle persons are driuen to put their feet vnder other mens tables, and their hands into other mens dishes, and to bee burdenous by borrowing and shifting, wherefoeuer they come.

Fourthly, they that are their owne seruants, take the way to better their state, and to be Masters of others, as *Iacobs* example and daily experience sheweth, and is promised as a reward in the 24. of this Chapter. But those of an high minde which denie a low port, and all painfull meanes of maintenaunce, too meane for men of their worth; are declining and ebbing, and likely to decay more and more, till they come to the bottome of want and penurie.

Reproofe, first of them that dissemble their estate, pretending great riches, when they are pressed with grieuous pouertie: and desiring to be esteemed wealtheie, when they know themselves to bee needie. This extremitie on one side, and the contrarie on the other, the holy Ghost doth censure in the chapter following: *There is that maketh himselfe rich, and hath nothing: and that maketh himselfe poore, hauing great riches.* Secondly, of such as being sunken in necessitie, and all men see them sticking fast in miserie, doe yet face out the matter and take as much vpon them as if they were of great place and abilitie, some in regard of parentage; some of former substance, now wasted and consumed; some of offices that they haue borne in time of their prosperitie; some of personages that they haue serued, or to whom they presently belong: and some of trim apparell onely, and that is also yet vn timer for.

Instruction, that euery man should deale according to equitie and iustice, in giuing the more allowance and countenance to them that are worthier persons. Sure it is that the Lord doth not

mistake when he himselfe assigneth to men their places, and teacheth vs whom to set before as the better, and whom to put after as the inferiour. Now since he doth preferre the poore, despised, industrious, laborious, and giueth his voyce for their precedence; why should wee giue titles to ruffians, and roysters, and idle companions, that haue nothing in them of grace and goodnes, of knowledge or learning, of arte or skilfulnes, of wealth or substance, nor the most of birth or parentage, why should wee make these superiours to the others? why should we make our selues guiltie of their pride, by feeding their vaine humours, and accessarie to their presumption, in consenting to their arrogant aspirings? Is it well done to defraud those of their right whom God approoueth of and commendeth, and so to discourage them in their good waies, and to yeeld more than right to them whom hee reprooueth and vilifieth, and so to animate them in their euill?

Verse 10. *A righteous man regardeth the life of his beast: but the mercies of the wicked are cruell.*

THE purpose and drift of these words tendeth to this, that euery godly and righteous man is also mercifull: and that no wicked person can possibly haue any true pitie or compassion in him. *A righteous man*, euery one that feareth God and is faithfull, *regardeth the life of his beast*, his loue and kindnesse and good dealing is so plentifull to men, and especially those which depend vpon him, and be of his charge, and at his finding, that it floweth ouer also to the cattell, and creatures which hee oweth or vseth, or is put in trust to looke to, or hath opportunitie offered to preferue from hurt or perishing. *But the mercies of the wicked*, those actions and waies of theirs which carrie the fairest shew and colour of mercie, *are cruell*, haue crueltie mixed therewith, either in purpose, or manner or euent insuing thereupon.

Dott.

Mercie is to be shewed not onely to men, but to the vnreasonable creatures also. As all creatures doe taste of, and liue by the abundant liberalitie and bountyfullnes of Gods hand, so would he

he haue them to feeble by sense, though they cannot discern it by reason, that there is also care for them and compassion in his children. Why did he forbid to kill the damme when they had taken away her yong ones, but that he would haue it knowne, that he alloweth not crueltie and wrong to be offered so much as to the filliest birds? The restraint that was of eating of blood, when the beasts were dead, declared that he would not haue tyrannic exercised on them while they are aliue. Leuit. 17. 10.

First, let vs consider that God hath made them all, and his they are, and he is good vnto them, and prouident for their preseruati- Reasons. 1.
on, as the Prophet saith, *Thou, Lord, doest saue both man and beast.* Psal. 36. 6.
And therefore we shall both shew our selues vnlike to him, and hurtfull to his, if we offer abuse and wrong vnto them.

Secondly, he hath lent them to vs for our help and seruice, and by their transaile are we eased, or by their flesh, or fleece, or milke, or increase, or some other profit made of them are we relieved, besides the delight that many of the minister to vs: and therefore how vnthankfull should we be to him that dealeth so kindly with vs, how vnfaithfull to him that committeth his goodes to our hands, how vniust to them that are to seruiceable to vs, if we be not carefull that they haue good vsage? 2

Thirdly, if we vse our selues in conscience and compassion to looke well to our beasts, wee cannot but deale more mercifullie with men: but if we accustome our selues to bee cruell to them, wee shall in time grow to bee fierce and violent towards our brethren. 3

Instruction, that wee should not onely exercise good husbandrie in keeping our cattell well, that they may doe vs the more worke, or carrie vs the better, or liue the longer, or be more saleable, but also to practise the dutie of righteousness in obeying God herein. That is certaine that many wicked men regard the liues of their beasts and prouide plentie of foode for them, yet not in mercie but in couetousnesse: not in loue to the creature, or him that made it; but in desire of their owne gaine and lucre: for they respect their horses, sheepe and oxen, more then their neighbours state, or their owne saluation; but these are not the righteous men which are here commended: A president and ex- Vse. 1.
ample.

Gen. 24. 32.

ample of faithfull regard of his beast, is to be found in the seruante of *Abraham*, in his journey to *Nahors* citie, in *Aram Naharaim*, who when he was come to the place, whither hee was sent, tooke order first that the Camels should bee vsadled, and meated, and haue litter put vnto them, and then dealt in the busines wherein hee was imployed, and after these things tooke his owne refection.

2

Reproofe of those that requite euill for good to the poore beasts that trauell for them, and vnder them, whom they deale as hardly with, as if they were rather noisome & hurtfull vnto them. Many waies they oppresse them, as with burdens too heauie, with stripes too many, with spurring too often, with pace too swift, with iourneyes too long, with meate too little, with dressing too slender &c. The Lord hath inioyned them perpetuall silence, neuer to complaine of these things, though they groane vnder them, otherwise if they had libertie of speech and reason to lay open their grieuances, the wronges which they sustaine would appeare to bee great, and many. And yet in an other sort, more extremitie then this is vsed against other sorts of creatures, and that is when men make a sport of making them miserable: when it is a pleasure to put them to paine: when it is a pastime to behold their torment and tearing. This proceedeth not of a tender heart: this is not the worke of righteousness: this delight will leaue no comfort behind it. Haue our sins in *Adam* brought such calamities vpon them, and shall we adde vnto them by crueltye in our owne persons? Haue our corruptions been a cause of that fiercenesse that is in many of them one against another, and shall we solace our selues in seeing them execute it? God forbid. If wee doe, it may iustly returne vpon our selues, their teeth, or hernes, or pawes assaulking vs, or else Gods owne hand by some other meanes, reuenging their wronges.

Doct. 2.

But the mercies, &c. All the fauours that sinfull men shew, doe commonly tend to some hurt.

The Lord doth often vse the wicked as instruments of good vnto his children; but though they do the worke, yet he sheweth the mercie: their hands and tongues are not so much directed by their owne loue and kindnes, as by his purpose and providence.

dence. *Iacob* was not ignorant of this point, when he refused the courteous offer of *Esaus*, who would either himselfe haue been a companion to him in his way, or left some of his seruants behind to gaurd him. When *Saul* pretended most readines to bring *Dauid* to preferment by matching him with his daughter, his meaning was to bring him to destruction by putting him into the hands of the Philistins. Gen. 33. 12.
13. 15.
1. Sam. 18. 17.

First generally true mercie is peculiarly appropriated to the godly as all the fruites and graces of the spirit are; and therefore the semblance of it in the wicked proceedeth from the flesh, and is euermore counterfeite, corrupt, and fleshly. Reasons. 1

Secondly in special, they vsually transuert their fauor & iustice, shewing mercie where they should exercise seueritie, and practising crueltie where they should shew mercie. *Saul* was so pitifull that he would spare *Agag*, though God commanded to slay him; but *Dauid* should haue died if hee could haue caught him: And hee made no scruple in killing fourescore and fise Priests of the Lord in one houre; it was a small matter in his eyes, to smite a whole citie of innocent people with the edge of the sword, both man and woman, both child and suckling, besides all their cattell. And so *Ahab* gaue *Benhadad* King of Aram to know, that he would vse him like a brother, and graunt him his life, whom God appointed to be handled like an enemy, and put to death: but he dealt with the Prophets of Israel in an other manner, and slew as many of them as he could come by. Euen the very sparing of notable wicked persons, is a decree of crueltie against the righteous, as they be iniurious to the liues of the sheep and lambs, that permit the wolues and foxes to liue and breede among them. 1. Sam. 22. 18.
39.

They vse to peruert, and ouerturne all their good turnes, at one time or other, with mischief or hurt either outwardly, or to the soules of them whom they make beholden to them. 2

Instruction not to be like to them, or to conformance our selues to their waies. Let loue be in our rebukes: let compassion bee in our stripes: let our seueritie be mercifull; but neuer let our mercies be cruell. 2. Not to cast our selues into their hands in hope that. Ips. 1.

that they will be fauourable to vs; if their meekenesse, if their mildnes, if their mercie bee cruellie, how immeasurably cruell will their malice, and wrath, and rage and furie be?

2 Reproose of those that neuer exercise any other mercie then that which is here condemned. They are very carefull for their familie and people that they shall haue refreshing, and libertie for their sports, and delights, but it is onely on the Lords day, when it doth more harme to their soules, then good to their bodies; for they will spare them no time from their owne workes, when they may recreate themselues with a good conscience. Others are as forward in giuing; they will be like to *Iob*, not to eate their morsels alone, but the poore shall euer haue part with them: but the choise of their almsmen is altogether vnlike to *Iobs*; for hee relieved the fatherlesse, and widowes, and poore impotent persons; and they bestow vpon a filthie generation of idle vagabonds, whom *Iob* chased from the very presence & companie of people.

Iob 30. 5.

Others will declare how pitifull they are, by helping men that are in distresses, and therefore if they might haue their wills, there should not be so many punished. But whose impunitie doe they seeke for? whom would they haue to escape either whip, or goale, or gallows? not such as be vniustly accused: not such as be overtaken with small infirmities: not such as shew themselues most penitent for their faults; but those that are ordinarie, obstinate, and impudent malefactors, and most pernicious and grievous offenders. These are as full of compassion as the Iewes were of mercie, when they cried to *Pilate*, *Barrabas*, *Barrabas*, let *Barrabas* liue and be deliuered.

Verse 11. *He that tilleth his land, shall bee satisfied with bread: but he that followeth the idle, is destitute of understanding.*

HE that tilleth his land, which is industrious and faithfull to doe good in any honest vocation, shall be satisfied with bread, shall haue competencie of all things that are needfull for him: but he that followeth the idle, vaine fellowes, which giue themselves to no good trade or occupation, and is idle as they are, is
destitute

destitute of vnderstanding, playeth the foole, and shall seele the smart and paine of it.

The opposition is, he that tilleth his land is wise, and shall bee satisfied with bread: but he that followeth the idle, or is idle (for that is the meaning) is destitute of vnderstanding, and shall bee filled with pouertie. So is the supplie made: Chap. 28. 19.

The exercise of husbandrie is a good and commendable vocation. He singlerh it out, as a paterne or ensample of all the rest, that if men labour in any worke that is no worse than that, they shall be sure that no exception can iustly be taken against it. Many exhortations tend to it; as, *Prepare thy worke in the field*, Proverbs 24. 27. Many reproofes and threatnings tend to it, as, *The slothfull will not plow because of winter, and therefore he shall begge in summer*, Chap. 20. 4. Many promises of blessings are to that purpose, as, *Thy barne shall be filled with abundance*: Chap. 3. 10.

First, it is the most ancient of all trades. God himselfe assigned it to Adam, and Adam made choise of it for his eldest sonne. *Reasons. 1*

It is as much void of guile and deceit as any, and very profitable and commodious. The labour of men is for good vse in it; and the labour of beasts is gainfull; as he saith, *Where none oxen are the crib is emptie, but much increase commeth by the strength of the ox*, chap. 14. 4. And in that respect there is a promise made vnto them, that they shall haue a part in mans plentie, and fare the better by mans welfare. *The oxen and the yong asses that till the ground, shall eate cleane prouender, which is winowed with the shewell and the fanne*. *Isai. 30. 24.*

It is necessarie both for Prince and subiects, and all sorts of people. *The abundance of the earth is for all: and the King consisteth by the field that is tilled*. *Eccle. 5. 8.*

Some can liue without flesh, and many without fruites, and more without fish, but none without bread. The Egyptians were not without fruits and fish, in the yeeres of scaritie, as it is probable, nor Iacob without cattell, as it is certaine, and yet through want of corne they were all in danger to perish.

Incouragement to them whose travell is in it, that they worke cheerefully. They are of as good note with God for their seruice, if they be faithfull, as others whose trades are more gainfull, and

better esteemed among men. The Merchants, and Goldsmiths, and Jewellers, and others of such places are not so often mentioned in the Scriptures as they be, nor animated with so many consolations as they are: the grand promises for blessing on their labours, is made to them in speciall, and the rest must deduct their comforts from thence by proportion.

- 2 Reproofe of them that disdain this calling, scorning to be of it, or to put their children to it, as accounting, and calling them hindes, and clownes, and peasants, and contemptible persons, that be of that profession. It is a righteous hand of God vpon vs, that tillage is so much decayed, because it is no better regarded: and that there should bee so much detracted daily from the employment of men, because there are so few men that are willing to be employed in it. Notwithstanding it is their great sinne, as may appeare by the premisses, which doe what they can, for their parts, to defraud the land of so ancient, honest, profitable, and necessarie a trade and vocation.

Doct.

But he that followeth the idle, &c. They that dispose themselves to idlenes, shall neither want example nor companie in it.

They shall haue al inticements and allurements to draw them to it, and hold them in it, so soone as they haue any inclination that way. They shall not be the first inuentors of that trade, but others haue vsed it before them, and diuers will practise it with them. They shall finde the ice broken to them, and a path beaten out for them, and all inducements to bring them into the snare.

Reasons. 1.

First, there are very many that are giuen to this sinne, as may appeare by the manifold admonitions, rebukes and threatnings to them that liue in it. It is a sure rule to bee obserued, that when the holy Ghost doth deale often and largely against any euill, it is such as is heinous, and dangerous, and many are subiect to it.

- 2 Secondly, they are sociable and delight in companie, and take pleasure to be diuers of them together. Experience confirmeth this, and maketh it apparant and manifest. How many doe sit together at drinking, and quaffing, and surfetting? how many doe flocke together to vaine playes, and idle sports and pastimes? How many were wont to swarme together euery where, as in

sundrie

sundrie places they do still, in that detestable course of wandring and rogiſhneſſe? It may ſeeme to haue been no delightfull habitation to liue in want and penurie and diſgrace in a ſolitarie wilderneſſe, and yet that was haunted by them, according as Iob teſtifieth: *They were chaſed forth from among men: they ſhowied as lob 30.5.7. them, as at a ſheefe. They roared among the buſhes, and vnder the thyiſles they gathered themſelues.*

Thirdly, they poyſon each others heart, when they come together, with ſuch ſpeeches, and exerciſes, as they are not eaſily reduced to any vertuous behauiour afterwards.

Admonition to looke to our ſelues, and our people, that the contagion of the ſocietie, periwaſions, or examples of vnthriftie persons, bring not either vs or ours to ioyne with them, or be like vnto them. Seeing the number of them is ſo great, our watchfulneſſe muſt be the more, that if wee may, we ſhunne their companie, if we may not, yet to take a preſeruatiue that we be not infected by them. Let this be remembred that though their number be great, yet there are none of them wiſe, and though they are preſently full of mirth, yet they will not long be full of wealth: and as they free themſelues from the paines that other men take, ſo they debarre themſelues from the plentie which others enioy, and fall into that want which others eſcape.

Iſ deſtitute, &c. Euery idle perſon is fooliſh. Though ſome of them haue knowledge, and that more than the greater part of them that be laborious and diligent, yet God will not vouchſafe iz the name of vnderſtanding, nor themſelues the credit to be called wiſe men. The ſame that he affirmeth here, he doth ſtand to, and iuſtifie in another place, repeating againe the ſelfe ſame words: *I paſſed by the field of the ſlothfull, and by the vineyard of the man deſtitute of vnderſtanding. And the conſequence doth alſo argue as much, when he ſendeth him to ſchoole to ſuch a ſimple Mittriſſe to be taught, ſaying, Goe to the Piſſmire, O ſluggard: be- hold her wares, and be wiſe.*

Fiſt, true wiſedome is neuer ſeparated from faith, in ones calling, becauſe it is euer ioyned with the feare of God, and the feare of God worketh in men obedience to the word of God, and

the word of God teacheth euery man to labour with his hands, (or otherwise) *the thing that is good*, Ephel. 4. 28.

2 Secondly, the want and miserie hee plungeth himselfe into, doth shew that wisdome is away. For wisdome dwelleth with prudence, and maketh men prouident for themselves, their state and familie.

3 Thirdly, his conceitednes doth euict his follie: for, *The slug-gard is wiser in his owne conceit, than seuen men that can render a reason*, Prou. 26. 16. And then ye know how the case standeth with him: *Seest thou a man that is wise in his owne eyes? there is more hope of a foole than of him*, Prou. 26. 12.

Vse.

Instruccion, to be affraid of so dangerous a sinne that bringeth so much mischief with it. What can be more hurtfull and pernicious than it is? What can bring a man into greater miseries? It draweth men into euill companie: euill companie will corrupt them with euill behauiour, and it, and euill companie, and euill behauiour will bring them into an euill state, and robbe them both of their wealth, & good wit. No theenes can do so much, no tyrants can make such a spoyle, no fire can burne vp and consume those things that it can. They doe no more but bereaue men of their money and substance as it doth, and it taketh away their wisdome and credit, as they doe not. When goods be gone, labour may get more, and friends may giue more to them that haue vnderstanding, or at least they shall haue peace in their hearts with God, and fauour with good men: but when vnderstanding is lost as well as their wealth, what shall become of them? They know not how to recouer their state: they know not how to beare their wants: they haue no consolation in God: they haue no countenance from godly men, they haue (continuing in that sin without repentance) no sure hope of saluation in heauen.

Verse 12. *The wicked desireth the defence of them that be euill: but the rote of the righteous giueth it.*

WHen the vngodly doe come into perils, and afflictions, and troubles doe come vpon them, all their hope of helpe

helpe refteth wholly in men, and thofe not the godly which might direct them, or pray for them, but finfull perfons as bad as themfelves, whose fauour and power they truft vnto, but in vaine, for they are deceiued by them: but the righteous are not or need not to be driuen to fuch shifts, the Lord Iefus Chrift their roote vndertaketh their prefervation, and doth not onely make a fhew thereof, but effectually performeth it.

It is the propertie of finners one to relie vpon another. It was an ordinarie thing with the godly Kings and good people of Ifrael to preuent plagues and dangers by faithfulnes and obedience to God, and to remoue them when any came, by humiliation and prayer to him: and it was ordinary with the wicked Kings, and finfull people to procure plagues by rebellion againft God, and to feeke remedie, by flying from him to his enemies. Sometimes they reposed vpon Egypt, as *Isaiah* complaineth, and threatneth them for it, saying, *Woe vnto them that goe downe into Egypt for helpe, and stay vpon horses, and trust in chariots, because they are many, and in horsemen, because they are very strong: but they looke not vnto the holy one of Ifrael, nor feeke vnto the Lord.* Sometimes their confidence was *Affhur*, as *Hofeai* ieth to their charge: *When Ephraim saw his sicknes, and Iudah his wound, then went Ephraim vnto Affhur, and sent vnto King Iareb: yet could hee not heale you, nor cure you of your wound.* *Isaiah 31.7.* *Hofea 5.13.*

First they are sensuall, and looke with a fleshly eie, and then there is great likelihood of helpe and succour to bee found at the hand of many wicked men, because their power seemeth so great, and their fauour so much towards such as are like to themfelves.

Secondly, God is an enemy to them, and they bee enemies to good men, and therefore they haue no expectation to be relieved of him, or to bee comforted by them. And this is alleaged as a cause why *Saul* consulted with the witch, because the Lord *gave* *him* not, neither by dreames, nor by *Urim*, nor yet by *Prophets*. *1. Sam. 28.6.*

Thirdly, they haue prouoked God so far, y^e he is purposed to execute his iudgments vpon them, & therefore they are left to themfelves, to take such a way, as will worke them woe, but doe them no good. For it hath been already declared in the former chapter,

ter, vers. 21. that though hand ioyne in hand the wicked shall not be vnpunished. And this maketh them liable to the curse that *Jeremy* denounceth, *Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arme, and withdraweth his heart from the Lord.* *Ieremie* 17.5.

750. 1.

Instruction to continue our faithfulness, that God may continue his fauour and goodnesse to vs. If we seeke him in our prosperitie, we shal find him in our aduersitie: if we serue him in our best safetrie, wee shall be preferred in our greatest perils: if our hearts be open to receiue his word, his eies will bee open to see our distresses, and we shall not need to sue to the wicked men for aide and protection.

2

Reproofe of their folly which cast themselues into such misery, as that they cannot be safe without such miserable helpers. Euill men must fall themselues, & how can they make other sinners to stand? They must be condemned and executed, and can they set their copanions at libertie? A wretched case is that malefactor in, that hath no better friends than him that standeth at the barre in giecues & bolts arraigned by him. It is as bad to haue the enemies sword to pearce ones sides without, as a ruinous house to fall on his head within. The seauen and twentie thousand men whom the wall fell vpon in *Aphek*, were in as bad state, as the hundred thousand that were slaine in the field. And it will appeare in the end, that all wicked men, when confidence is reposed in them, are nothing else but swelling walles, and old rotten castles that are tumbling downe.

1. Reg. 20 30.

Deff. 2.

But the roote, &c. There is no danger to them that grow by faith in Iesus Christ. The tallest cedars, and strongest oaks are not so fast settled and firmly rooted, as is the lowest Saint and weakest Christian. In those kind of trees, the roote cannot defend the braunches, nor bodie: the wind may breake off the boughes and armes, and the axe may cut downe the whole stocke without resistance: but our root doth minister as much safetrie as sappe to the whole Church, and euery sprigge of the same. No stormes and tempests, no force nor weapons shall separate the least of his from him, nor any way make spoile of them.

Reasons. 1.

First, he drieth vp the spring and fountaine of all hurts and dangers,

dangers, and that is sinne; the guiltinesse of it is taken away by remission, and the punishment by his suffering, and the power by his grace, & what then is the peril that we should stand in feare of?

Secondly, he maketh all his fruitfull, and the fruit is a fence to Gods trees, though mens bee more beaten and broken by cudgels and poles for that which groweth vpon them.

Thirdly, every one of them that haue Christ for their roote, haue God the Father for their dresser and keeper: Ioh. 15. And therefore if any thing bee hartfull in them, he taketh it away: if any thing be wanting to them, he maketh supplie: if violence be attempted against them, he resisteth it. This happinesse of the Church and vse of particular Christians doth God himselfe speake of, making profession of his prouident care of them in the prophetic of *Isaiah*, Sing, saith he, *of the vineyard of red wine. I the Lord doe keepe it: I will water it euery moment: lest any assaile it, I will keepe it night and day.* Isai. 27. 3. 3.

Fourthly, one especiall part of the sappe that Christ the roote of Christians doth send vp to his branches, is the spirit of prayer, and that maketh their prayers fit to come vp to him, and hee maketh them meete to be presented to his father: now then in all their troubles they will surely crie to him, and whensoever they doe crie he will more surely heare them, and whensoever he heareth them, he will most assuredlie helpe them.

Instruction, to trie in what state we stand by the roote that we grow vpon. Every man and woman, euery person that is descended from *Adam* is a branch of a tree, either growing naturallie, as he was borne in the old stocke, and so hee is subiect to Gods displeasure & iudgements; or els is ingrafted into Christ as being new borne, and so hath his part in Gods fauour and mercies. If we would therefore haue our hearts at libertie, without dread of calamities and miserie, we must draw all our safetie from whence we deriue our saluation, and that is from the Lord Iesus our Saviour, and our being in him, and growing in him, and communion with him. Externall meanes will not suffice to secure vs from hurts, without this inward medicine, and deliuerance from plagues by God owne hand will not comfort vs, without the respect of this cause.

Consolation

Rom. 8. 1.

2 Consolation to them that be in Christ; as the Apostle saith to the Romans, that there is no damnation to them, so the spirit saith here, that there is no danger to them: there is assurance that nothing shall keepe them from heauen and euertlasting life, and here is a warrant that nothing shall hurt them in earth, and in this life. That godly gloriation which is vsed there, against the enemies of our soules, may fitly also bee vsed here against the enemies of our bodies: *If God be on our side, who can bee against vs? Who shall separate vs from the loue of Christ? shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or famine, or nakednes, or perill, or sword? Though Sathan and sinners would, yet they can doe nothing against vs that shall bee for our hurt; and though God himselfe can, yet he will doe nothing to vs, that shall not turne to our good.*

Rom. 8. 31. 35.

Verse 13. *The euill man is snared by the wickednes of his lippes, but the wise shall come out of aduersitie.*

A Swicked men doe maliciouslie abuse their tongues to the hurt of others, so also many times they ouershooote themselves so farre as that aduantage is taken of their words to their owne perill and hurt; as on the other side the godly doe often times helpe themselves out of troubles by the wisdom of their speeches.

Doct. 1.

They that haue euill tongues doe most hurt themselves with them. This point we reserue to be handled in the sixt and seuenth verses of the eighteenth chapter, where will bee fitter occasion to handle it more fullie.

Doct. 2.

But the righteous shall come out, &c. He is neuer destitute of a good helper in his troubles that hath a good tongue to deale for him.

Hee doth not here, onely set downe the assurance that such as feare God haue to escape from their afflictions, but the meanes wherby they obtaine their deliuerance. God hath ordained troubles for his people to be tried with: and he hath appointed the issue out, as well as the entrance in: and their enemies malicious words doe commonly worke their molestation: and their

owne

owne Christian speeches doe vsually procure their peace and libertie.

First, the wrath of those that are incensed against them, is thereby much abated, if not altogether pacified. If they bee not wholly implacable, and such as haue cast off all humanitie, milde and gentle speeches will mitigate their displeasure. *A Prince is pacified by staying of anger, and a soft answer breaketh the bones:* Prou. 25. 15. Reasons. 1.

Secondly, words of truth being wisely deliuered will very much grace a good cause, to the satisfiing of them that knew it not before, and the refuting of them that are false accusers, and the winning of their fauours that for mercie were not so well affected to them. 2

Hereof we haue an example in the prophetic of *Ieremie*: The Priests and the Prophets accused him to the Princes and people, as a man deseruing to be put to death for his doctrine. Hee hath libertie to speake for himselfe; hee proueth his innocencie, by shewing the author of all that he preached, and that was God giuing him a commaundement to publish it: and the end that they should repent and amend their waies, and so escape the iudgements threatened. The Princes, and all the people presently were on his side, they spake for him, they cleared him of that crime which was charged vpon him, they iustified his faithfulness in his ministerie. *This man is not worthie to die (say they) for he hath spoken to vs in the name of the Lord.* Ierem. 26. 16.

Thirdly, with godly and gracious words of prayer, godly men preuaile with God himselfe, as it was said of *Iacob*, and therefore no aduersitie can preuaile against them. For this, and the vses thereof see the eight verse of the former chapter, where are almost the very words of this present text. 3
Gen. 32. 28.

Verse 14. *A man shall be satiat with good things by the fruite of his mouth, and the recompence of a mans hands shall God giue unto him.*

A Man shall be satiate with good things, &c. That is, shall bee recompenced by the Lord with great blessings, for the good vsage

vsage of his tongue, when hee speaketh to Gods glorie, and the edification of his brethren, or for iustice and equitie in the behalfe of them that are wronged, and iniuriouſlie dealt with. Hee will stirre vp men to loue him, and shew kindnes vnto him, yea those sometimes which be of great place and able to doe him much good, as it is said, *he that loneth purenes of hart, for the grace of his lippes the King shall be his friend: Prou. 22. 11.* But especially hee himselfe will bestow vpon him all good things for this life, and graces for euerlasting life, and glorie for life euerlasting. *And the recompence, &c.* And so shall euery mans good workes bee also rewarded with mercie and fauour, though there bee nothing in them of desert and merit.

Doct.

Nothing shall be unrewarded that is well performed in word or deede. This hath bin already handled in the eighteenth verse of the former chapter vpon these words, *He that soweth righteousness, shall receive a sure reward.*

Verse 15. *The way of a foole is right in his owne eyes; but he that heareth counsell is wise.*

THe way of a foole] The wicked course and behaviour of a sinful person, whom God reputeth a foole: (for it is not understood of an idiot, as may appeare by the comparison betweene them, cap. 26. 12. *Seeſt thou a man wise in his owne conceit, there is more hope of a foole than of him*) is right in his owne eyes; hee liketh of it, and alloweth himselfe in it, as safe and good for him to walke in, and consequently reiecteth all good aduice, and admonitions: *But hee that heareth counsell*, which suspecteth his owne iudgement, and receiueth direction from them that are wise, and godly, and obeyeth it, *he is wise*, sheweth the wisdom, that he had before, and learneth more, and findeth the fruite of it by good effect.

Doct.

The worse any man is, or doth, the lesse he seeth his euill. They that commit the most finnes, haue hope that they stand guiltie of fewest: they that fall into the greatest transgressions, imagine that their faults be the smallest: they y^e sinke into the deepest dangers, doe dreame of greatest safetie: they that haue longest continued

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in rebellion against God, of al others, for the most part, are slowest to repentance. These are they which are spoken of when it is said, *there is a generation that are pure in their owne conceite, and yet are not washed from their filthinesse.* Obserue it in all sorts of sinners, and it will be found that the greatest offenders are furthest from all remorse for their offences: Papists and Idolaters doe thinke they merit at Gods hand, and deserue heauen for their idolatrie and superstition. Persecutors and tyrants, as our Sauour saith, *Ioh. 16. 2.* will thinke they doe God seruice, when they kill Christians, and Ministers, and Apostles. If men of smaller infirmities bee admonished of things amisse in them, it is not very hard to bring manie of them to a sight of their offences, insomuch as they will acknowledge themselues to be faultie, & thanke him that reproveth them; but when notorious adulterers, or drūnkards, or blasphemers be rebuked, what distemper, what rage, what furie doe they breake out into? as though a most grieuous indignitie were offered vnto them; as though most innocent men were vniustly defamed.

First, they are ouerwhelmed with the mist of darknesse, and covered with the spirit of error and ignorance: the diuell hath blinded their minds (as the Apostle saith) that all iudgement and vnderstanding is taken away from them. And S. *Paul* testifieth, that when he was in the worst case, he knew nothing but that hee had been in the best: before he knew the meaning of the law, hee made noe doubt but that he had been aliue: but when hee saw the sense and iustice of the commandement, he found sinne to be aliue, and himselfe to be dead: *Rom. 7. 9. 10.* *Reasons. 1.* *2. Cor. 4. 4.*

Secondly, the custome of sinning doth obdurate the heart, and depriue it of all sense of the sinne, though neuer so hainous: the feeling faileth, and lust with a greedy desire of satisfying it selfe in euill, increaseth euery day to a fulnesse. *2*

Thirdly, the text it selfe yeeldeth a reason why they haue so good opinion of their owne waies, because they are led with pride, and heare not such as might shew them any thing to the contrarie. They haue allowance by word and practise from fooles like to themselues, and their own carnall reason doth con-

sent with them: and then they take to proceede from enuie, whatsoeuer is spoken against them.

Vse. 1.

Terror of conceited persons, which proceede on wilfully in their wicked waies, and no man can reclaime them. They are wise, they trow, hauing liued so long, to know what is good for themselves, they are not now to learne how to serue God, and be saued. But the wise God calleth them foolish men: he saith that their streight way is crooked, and their safe way is dangerous, and that the issues thereof are the waies of death. When they take themselves to be happie he iudgeth them miserable: when they looke for welfare, he threatneth woe: when they presume of a blessing, he pronounceth, and will accordingly execute a curse. Hercof speaketh *Isaiab*, *Woe to them that are wise in their owne eyes, and prudent in their owne sight*; They make themselves odious to God, they flie from repentance, they shun reformation, they run into destruction.

Isa. 5. 21.

2

Confutation of them that imagine a good meaning towards the seruice of God and their owne saluation to be sufficient, whatsoeuer their meanes be which they vse. If their mind be to haue their way good, they thinke it cannot be euill: if there bee a willingnesse that it should be streight, they rest assured that it will not be crooked. But if the opinion and willes of men be of such force to rectifie their waies, what way would not leade to saluation? We shewed before that such as murdered the Saints of God thought to serue God, and bee saued by it. Why then was not *Paul* in as good case before his conuersion as afterwards? *Mens of corrupt minds, and destitute of the trueth, thinke that gaine is godlines*, why should not many courtious men then enter into the kingdome of heauen? A traneller in his iourney may wander out of his way, notwithstanding his meaning to goe right, if he will make no enquire for it. And no trade or science is attained vnto, by the willingnesse of hauing, but of learning of it.

1. Tim. 6. 5.

3

Consolation to them that are not confident of themselves to leane on their wisdom, but enquire for direction in the booke of God, and take aduise and counsell from his seruants. Though the world deeme them sillie soules and void of wit, yet the Lord esteemeth

esteemeth them for wise and men of vnderstanding. And so will he proue them, and so shall they find, and so by euent in the end shall others well perceiue.

Verse 16. *A fooles wrath is made knowne the same day: but a prudent man conereth shame.*

THe meaning of the holy Ghost is not to condemne all kind of anger: for it is one of the powers of the soule, which God created as an ornament in man: and godly anger is a part of Gods Image in him, and a grace commended in *Moses, Elias, Elisha*, and our Sauour himſelfe, and he that is alwaies altogether deſtitute of this doth prouoke God to bee angrie with him, for want of zeale and hatred of ſinne. But it is a paſſionate anger that is here reprobued, which is not a power of the ſoule but an impotencie. He that conceiueth the other is an agent, and doth a ſeruice to God: but hee that is moued with this, is a mere patient, and ſinne hath in that caſe preuailed againſt him. Now it is ſaid that a foole will be knowne the ſame day, that is, ſuddenlie and ſpeedily, as ſoone as he is prouoked, he will ſhew it by outcries, reuillings, or threatnings, or other ſuch like ſignes of choller: But a wiſe man, ſo farre as his wiſedome worketh, and his naturall corruption and infirmities breake not out, will hide ſhame, that is, will ſuppreſſe his anger, and paſſe by the iniuries offered to him, and not diſgrace himſelf by returning reprochful ſpeeches to him that hath done him the wrong.

They much bewray and lay open their folly that are giuen to *Doſt.* be haſtie to anger.

God did ſee it before within, but now men ſhall alſo diſcerne it without: that which formerlie did lurke in the ſoule will breake out by this into ſight. It will ſhew it ſelfe in their countenance, in their geſtures, in their words, in their actions. And therefore it is ſaid that *the diſcretion of a man deferreth his anger: and his glory* *Prou. 11.17.* *is to paſſe by an offence.*

Fiſt the originall and roote of this raſh and haſtie anger is ſin- *Reasons,* full and euill: it proceedeth from the corruption of nature: it is the worke of the fleſh, and a limbe of the old man; *Gal. 5. 20.*

Col. 3. 8. That holy anger against sinne and Gods dishonour doth not come so easily, nor is so readie at hand; that must be labored for, and obtained by prayer and other godly exercises; and when there is cause of it, our flesh is very vnwilling to entertaine it.

Secondly more specially, pride and a hie minde that disdaineth to beare any indignities doth kindle it, and cause the flame thereof to breake out so violently.

Thirdly for the manner thereof, it is inconsiderate and without all iudgement, taking those to be enemies that are friends, and those to be offences that are kindneses, and those offences to be the greatest that are the least, and that to deserue much blame and punishment which is to be passed by with silence.

Fourthly the effects of it are daungerous, as S. James saith, *that the wrath of man worketh not the righteousnesse of God*, Iam. 1. 20. And this scripture, *that he that is hastie to anger committeth follie*, yea exalteth folly, Prou. 14. 17. 29. as shall bee shewed more particularly in that place: And our Sauour, that hee that is angrie with his brother vnadvisedly shall bee culpable of iudgement. And he that shall raile with all and call his brother foole, shall be punished with hell fire, Mat. 5. 22.

Use. 1.

Instruction to vse meanes that our hearts may bee stored with the wisdom which is from aboue, that is peaceable and gentle. Let vs not rake in the sinke of others mens faults to annoy our selues with the vnfauorie smell of them, and therewith to be defiled and made as vnfauorie to others. Hee that will take all advantages of wronges done to him shall wrong his owne name with infamie: and he that couereth the shame of others in priuate iniuries, doth actually publish his owne praise, as the holy Ghost saith, *It is a mans glorie to passe by an offence: it is his honour to cease from strife*, Pro. 19. 11. & 20. 3. Consider how amiable and louely a grace this mildnes, this meekenesse, this long sufferance and forbearance is: it declareth wisdom, it winneth credit, it draweth loue, it pearceth their hearts, if any thing can, that are so spared, it bringeth comfort to our owne soules for the assurance of Gods mercie in pardoning of our sinnes.

Reproofe of them that for credites sake, because they would not be counted fooles, will risse into euery word that is spoken,
and

and every action that is done against them. And so to subide the name of fooles, they will doe the workes of fooles, and to haue the reputation of wise men, they will practise that which is contrarie to wisdom: they will shame themselues in desire of honour, and bring contempt vpon their owne heades, in hope to be much regarded. When they shew themselues much displeased, it seemeth to them that they are much feared, and indeede they are much despised: great heate with offer of reuenge, they thinke will be imputed to great courage and magnanimity, but God and wise men ascribe it to folly and debilitie. It is a certaine rule of truth, that he is most valiant, that is most patient: and so getteth the victory that ouercommeth euill with goodnesse: And no conquerer is so mightie as he that subdueth his owne passions and dis tempered affections. For so doth the Lord himselfe who is the fittest vmpire in this and all other causes, set downe his award: *He that is slow to anger is better then the mightie man: and hee that ruleth his owne mind, is better then he that winneth a citie.* Rom. 12. 1. Prou. 16. 3.

Verse 17. *He that speaketh truth, will shew righteousness: but a false witnesse vseth deceit.*

HE that speaketh, ordinarily in his common speech that which is true, will shew righteousness, that is, will carie himselfe iustlie, and further righteousness with his testimonie, when hee shall bee publicly called thereunto. But a false witnesse, a false man becoming a false witnesse, will vse deceit, will make a shew of truth, and peraduenture vtter some part thereof, but with such craft and cunning, as shall be contrarie to righteousness, and hurtfull to any good cause.

He that speaketh the truth, &c. They that vse not their tongues to the truth in priuate, can hardly be brought to deale truelie in publike.

There must be as well a trayning of that to make it fit for equitie and iustice, as of the hands, and other parts of the bodie to make them skillfull in handling a weapon, and bearing of armes, and doing of other feates that belong to a souldier. As no man is meete to be made a publicke person, and to be called to eminent place

place either of magistracie or ministerie, that hath not before declared his worthinesse by shewing forth those vertues, and excellent qualities which the holy Ghost prescribeith in the scriptures: so likewise is not any competent for any worke that is publicke, vnlesse his former conuersation vpright and honest, commend him vnto it, but least of all if the contrarie be found common and ordinarie with him. The rule which our Sauour giueth in another case, will hold as firmly in this. *Hee that is faithfull in the least, he is also faithfull in much: and he that is vnjust in the least, is also vnjust in much.*

Luk. 16. 10.

Reasons.

First, the mouth of the man is the mouth of the mans treasure: that which he speaketh he best loueth: that which is most in the lippes, hath greatest place in the heart. If therefore the trueth be deere vnto him, he will assuredly shew it forth, when hee shall stand for that purpose before God, and his substitute, and doe so good a seruice of loue and pietie: but if hee haue any fellowship with falschood, he will now take part with it, beeing voide of the feare of God, and affraide to displease man, and hauing so fit opportunity to gratifie his fleshly friends, and to procure thanks, and recompence to himselfe.

2

Secondly, no man exerciseth the truth at any time conscionably but by the spirit of trueth, and that directing mens hearts at other times in matters of lesse weight, will not faile them at their greatest neede, when they are to performe a duetie of so great importance: and so on the other side Sathan hath the disposing of their tongues that giue themselues to lying: he is their father, he teacheth them their trade, and tasketh them in their worke, and they be wholly at his commaundement: and who doubteth but that he will commaund them to be on his side, and to take against the truth so farre as the knowledge of the truth shall make against his practises?

Vj.

Instruction, for them that would not fall to falsewitness bearing, that would not incurre the displeasure of God, and hazard the losse of their owne credit, that they acquainte themselues with true speaking in all their words, so as it may bee familiar with them when they are in any cause to bee disposed: that they deale soundly in the company of few, lest they shew their falschoode

falschoode in prefence of many: that they hate all lying among the meanest, and thereby auoide it among the greatest. 2. To iudges, and magistrates, and all ministers of iustice, that they be very circumspect, so farre as in them is, what manner of persons they admit for Iurours, and Quest-men to deliuer vp verdicts: or to be accusers, or witnesses for giuing in of euidence: and well to sift the testimonie of thē that are wont to faile of fidelitie, lest as they vse to fill mens eares with vntruths, so they also defile the place of iudgement with periuie, and vniustice. How many righteous men may a few such deceiuers turne out of the right way? what wrong may they offer, what hurt may they doe, what mischief may they worke both in oppressing them that are innocent, and clearing of the wicked?

Will shew righteousnesse, vseth deceite, &c. The speaking of true words is no note of a faithfull man, vnlesse it bee in due manner, *Doct. 2.* and plaine meaning.

False witnesses doe not alwaies vtter flat lies, and palpable vntruths: for then they would be soone espied, and quicklie conuincd, and easily confuted: they would bee censured of euery man, and credited of no man: but their fraude is couered with a faire shew of veritie, as slips of copper appeare to be good coine, when they are gilded ouer. The promise of euerlasting life is not giuen to all that speake the truth, but onely to them *that speake the truth in their hearts*, that is, in sinceritie and vprightnesse. *Psal. 15. 2.* The diuell himselfe did speake that which was true, and euen the words of holy truth to Iesus Christ, when he said that God had giuen a charge to his Angels to hold his people in their hands, *Marth. 4. 6.* that they should not dash their foote against a stone: but it was guilefully deliuered, a materiall part being suppressed, and the rest peruerbed to draw him to sinfull presumption. It was a true information that was giuen to Saul by Doeg, that *Ahimelech the Priest had ministred both foode, and weapon to Dauid*: and by the *Ziphims that Dauid hid himselfe in the wood by them*: *1. Sam. 22. 10. & 23. 19.* It was a true informatiō that was giuen to Nebuchadnezzar by the Chaldeans, that *Shadrach, Meschach, and Abednego would not serue his Gods, nor worship the image that he had set up*: and it was a true information that was giuen to Darins by his princes, that *Daniel regarded*

Dan. 6. 13.

not the decree that he had sealed, but made his petition three times a day: but all these true informations were made by false men, of deceitfull lips and malicious hearts for wicked purposes.

Reasons. 1.

First, God heareth our words, beholde:h all our proceedings, he looketh to the heart especially, and obserueth likewise the manner of our testimonies, not onely what is vttered, but how much, whether all that ought to be, or more then should bee, or the iust measure that is required, and onely they that can approue themselues to him, for sinceritie and vprightnesse, are to be reputed faithfull, and the rest are but craftie dissemblers.

2

Secondly, if true words alone would passe for currant without further respect of drift, and manner, those things would be many times separated which God would haue alwaies ioyned together, and those things would be made opposite, which hee appointeth to be subordinate one to another: truth is oftentimes spoken without loue that will peruert iustice and true dealing, and stirre vp oppression and violence, as is to be seene in the former examples. But so it must not be, a breach must not be made among those that are euer to be knit together withan vnseparable bond of vnion. *Thou shalt sweare,* saith the Prophet, *the Lord lieth, in truth, in iudgement, and in righteousness;* that is, thou shalt truly, rightly, and righteouslie professe him, and take an oath by him, when thou hast a cause, and calling to sweare, and accordingly dispose of all the rest of thy speeches.

Ierem. 4. 2.

Vse. 1.

Instruction so to order and guide our lippes in all that we say, that men may finde nothing but veritie in the matter which wee declare, and God may see nothing but sinceritie in the end which we propose. And so though we be sifted, yet we shall not bee shamed: and though there bee accusations (as the truth must looke to be quarrelled withall) yet there will bee no conuictions, so long as an vpright heart doth cleere vs.

2

Reproofe of guilefull persons whose trade is to be painters of bad causes. If any man haue ragged, torne, and rotten matters in hand, which euery honest man reiecteth, let him come to them, and they will set such colours and pictures thereupon, as shall make them appeare very beautifull. But let them know that they shall make themselues to be base, and God will bring such cunning

ning deceiuers (as hee hath alreadie dealt with diuers equiuo-
cant sophisters) to shame and contempt.

Verse 18. *There is that speaketh words like the pricking of a sword:
but the tongue of wise men is health.*

THere is, a brood and companie of sinfull fooles, which *speak*
words like the prickings of a sword, that is, dangerous, and per-
nicious, which pierce deeper to the hurt of mens names and
states, then the edge and point of a sword doth to ones bodie.
But the tongue of the wise is health, their speeches are hole some,
and helpfull both to themselues and others.

No weapon is more hurtfull then a wicked tongue. Among *Doct. 1.*
all the complaints which the godly, and Gods owne spirit make
against the wicked in the scriptures, they seldome complaine of
any thing more then of their virulent and pestiferous mounthes.
It is said of flatterers *that their words are more gentle then oyle, and*
yet they are swords: Psal. 55. 21. It is said of false accusers, such as
Doeg was, that their tongues are sharpe rasors that cut deceitfully;
Psal. 52. 2. It is said of false witnesse bearers, *that they are like*
hammers, and swords, and sharpe arrowes: Prou. 25. 18. It is said of
all sorts, and of euery one of them, *that their throate is an open se-*
pulchre: they haue used their tongues to deceit, the poison of aspes is
under their lippes, Rom. 3. 13.

First, they cause swords to be drawne, and blood to bee shed, *Reasons. 1*
and men to be slaine, and much mischief to be wrought. *Ahi-*
melech and his brethren the Priests, were killed by the tongue.
Naboth and his sonnes were killed with the tongue. Our Sau-
our Christ himselfe was killed by the tongue, as *Peter* chargeth
vpon the that procured his death: *Him haue ye taken by the hands*
of the wicked, and haue crucified and slaine: you desired a murderer
to be giuen you, and killed the Lord of life, Act. 2. 23. & 3. 15.

Secondly, the sword, or any other weapon can onely hurt
them that are present, and in place neere to it: but the stroke of
the tongue will light vpon them most daungerouslie that are ab-
sent, and farre off: no place or distance can helpe against it: and
one man may doe mischief thereby to a great multitude. *Doeg*

1. Sam. 11. 19. with one breath destroyed the whole citie of Nob, both man and woman, both child and suckling, and yet was not present at it. What a slaughter would *Haman* haue made throughout the whole Persian Monarchie, if the Lord had not wonderfully prevented it?

3 Thirdly, when men be assaulted with weapons, others will be ready according to their power and opportunitie to succour and defend them, or to pitie them for the wrong and violence which they sustaine; but a malignant tongue causeth others to smite those whom it smiteth, either by reporting that which it affirmeth, or by beleeuing that which it reporteth.

4 Fourthly, the sword can onely wound the bodie, and take away the naturall life, and when the breath is gone the paine is ended: but a pestilent tongue may poyson the soule, and deprive men of euerlasting life, and bring vpon them perpetuall torments for ever.

Pfe. 1.

Admonition to be warie how we carrie our tongues, that they be safely put vp from doing of hurt, and neuer vnsheathed, but when we are to stricke at sinne, and to skirmish with Sathan. It is not good to make frayes with our brethren, and to draw vpon their names: If we cannot vse our weapons better, the Lord will binde vs to the peace, and take order that his people may goe more safely by vs.

2 Instruction to auoide the companie of such sinfull hackesters that are neuer without such deadly weapons. What can a Christian doe or say, or omit, that will not set their tongues on worke? And how can they open their mouthes to speake with their tongues, but that they must needs spit venome? If they be angrie, their bitter raylings, and reuillings shall haue sharp points, & keene edges: if they be merrie, they will persecute with taunts and girds, & biting iests: howsoeuer they be disposed they will vomit our impious othes, and blasphemies, or such other corrupt speeches as will either bring griefe, or infection. 2. To be alwaies armed, and well fenced against them, because we shall haue necessary occasions diuers times to bee in presence with them. That therefore wee seeke protection from God by prayer, as the Prophet did, saying: *Deliver me, O Lord, from the euill man: preserve me from the*

Psal. 140. 1. 3.

euill

cruell man: which sharpen their tongues like a serpent: adders poison is under their lippes. And withall let vs put on innocencie: for that will repell their strokes, and ward them off, that they shall neuer hurt vs deadly. True it is that none are so much laid at, as they which are most blamelesse, the greateſt accusations, and threatnings, and scoffes are againſt them: but yet they eſcape beſt of all others, becauſe they are leaſt liable to all thoſe kind of curſed ſpeakings.

But the tongue of wiſe men, &c. It is the propertie of good men *Doct. 2.* to uſe their lippes to doe good with them. This point hath been in ſome part, alreadie handled in the ſecond claufe of the ſixt verſe, and we purpoſe, if it pleaſe God, to ſtand more largely vpon it in the fifteenth chapter verſe 4. where is ſaide that *an holſome tongue is a tree of life.*

Verſe 19. The lippe of truth ſhall be ſtable for euer, and a lying tongue but for a moment.

THe meaning is, that ſuch as ſpeake the truth in vprightneſſe will not varie in their talke, but tell the ſame tale againe, and be like to themſelues in that which they ſhall ſay, whereas lyers be in and out, affirming and denying, and ſpeaking contradictions in the ſame matter.

Onely true men are conſtant in their words.

Doct.

They goe not from that which they haue well ſpoken, as they will not ſtand to that which they haue failed in, as *Iob* profeſſed of himſelfe, ſaying, *I will lay mine hand vpon my mouth. Once haue I ſpoken, but I will anſwere no more, yea twice, but I will proceede no further.* *Iob. 39. 37. 38* This cauſed the Apoſtle *S. Paul* ſo ſeriouſlie to cleare himſelfe of all lighneſſe and ynconſtancie, that the *Corinthians* ſhould haue no ſuſpicion that with him ſhould be *yea, yea, and nay, nay,* *2. Cor. 1. 18.* but that his promiſes, and preaching, and purpoſes were ſtable, and firme, and vnchangeable.

Fiſt, their matter will helpe their memorie: for that which is truth once, will be truth euer, ſo that the ſame ground and ſubiect remaineth ſtill to repeate, and reiterate, as was to bee ſpoken of at the beginning.

2

Secondly, the same spirit that worketh a loue & conscience of the truth, wherby men are made to be true, doth neuer cease to be the same : therfore as it seasoneth the heart, & guided the heart at the first, so it will stablish the heart, and direct the lips to the end. For sinceritie, and vprightnes is of all things most durable, & least subiect to alteration and change. And that *S. Paul* assigneth for a cause of his vnvariable constancy, that he minded not those things which he did mind according to the flesh, whereby there should be with him, *yea, yea, and nay, nay.* 2. Cor. 1. 17. Now liers doe want all these helpes : they had neede to haue good memories, to remember what they said before, lest they tell a contrarie tale : for the thing related cannot put them in mind of it. For they vse not to frame their words to the veritie of the matter which they speake of, and to the seruing of their owne turnes, and effecting of their purposes, as he speaketh of the vnconscionable chapman : *It is naught, it is naught, saith the buyer : but when hee is gone apart hee boasteth.* A notable example of a wandring, vnregenerate, and vnstable tongue speaking contrarities almost with the same breath, is to bee seene in that blasphemous rayling *Rabshakeh* whom the King of *Asshur* sent against *Ierusalem* in the time of *Hezekiah*. In the entrance of his speech hee seemed to bee all for the Lord : he taxeth *Hezekiah* for taking downe his hie places and altars, hee pretendeth obedience vnto him, as though he came thither by his commaundement, saying, *The Lord said, Goe vp against this land, and destroy it.* But before he had made an end, the Lord God of *Israel*, and the Idols of the Gentiles were all one with him. And therefore hee matcheth him with the conquered Gods of *Hamath*, and of *Arpad*, and of *Sepharuaim* &c. that seeing they could not deliuer their countries out of his hands, the Lord was not able to deliuer *Ierusalem* from him. The lying miscreants in the Psalmes are bragging of the liberty and freedome of their tongues, being altogether slaues and drudges to *Sathan*, lust, and lewdnesse. Though it bee neuer so much against their knowledge, though it lie neuer so heauie vpon their conscience, though it turne to their perpetuall shame and disgrace, yet if the diuell, and the corruption of their hearts, will haue them to speake, they must affirme it, if to denie, they must say

Prou. 20. 14.

Isai. 36. 7. 10.
19. 20.

Psal. 12. 4.

say

ſay it, and eate their wordes, how vniuſly and impudentlie ſouer.

Inſtruction to be aduiſed in our ſpeeches, that we vtter nothing *verſe.* but that which will become vs to ſpeake againe, and is lawfull to performe. It was a fault in *Dauid* to ſwear ſo peremptorie that he would kill *Nabal*, his familie, and euery mothers child of them. It was his ſtabilitie in goodneſſe to breake off ſuch a purpoſe, and neither to ſay it againe, nor doe it at all. And it was the raſhnes of *Peter* to be ſo reſolute in promiſing that which was not in his power to performe. It was to be imputed to his conceitedneſſe, and not conſtancie, that he ſtoode ſo ſtiffely in deniall of that which Chriſt told him would come to paſſe, and gaue no place therein to our Sauour, but had the laſt word of him. It is wiſedome then to foreſee the euents that are like to follow: If wee affirme ought let vs know our warrant and ground, that wee are able to proue it: if wee denie any thing, let the caſe be cleere that it be not prooued againſt vs: if we vndertake any thing, let vs be fully aſſured that it is lawfull, and meete, and poſſible for vs to doe it. And yet this ſufficeth not vnleſſe there be ſoundneſſe and ſinceritie without carnall reſpects in our ſayings. If the ende bee not good which is aimed at in ſpeaking, if the heart bee not faithfull of him that ſpeaketh, there can neuer bee any firmeneſſe or certeintie in the ſpeeches. *There is no conſtancie, ſaith Dauid* *Pla. 8. 9.* concerning the wicked, *in their mouthes, within they are very corruption.* For other uſes that might haue been made of this point, looke in the tenth chapter, and twentieth verſe.

Verſe 20. *Deceit commeth to the heart of them that pracliſe miſchiefe, and ioi to the counſellers of peace.*

D*Eceit commeth to the heart, &c.* that is, ſorrow and griefe commeth to the hearts of them that plot miſchiefe againſt others by aduiſe, or attempt, when they ſhall finde themſelues deceiued in their deuifes. But ſuch as uſe their thoughts and words to moue men to be at peace with God and their neighbours, and to walke in the way of peace and good proſperitie, ſhall not faile of the comfort of their faithfull and whoſome counſell.

Craftie

Deft. 1.

Craftie persons shall feelee the smart and woe of their owne subtrill practises.

Chap. 11. 18.

When their hearts take pleasure in inuenting of euill, they must be put to the paine to beare the burden of their euill inuentions. Vexation and mourning are not so meete for any, as for them that studie how they may vexe their brethren, and bring them to mourne. As we haue already shewed that wicked workes deceiue them that doe them, so for the same causes it will appeare that the warping of sinfull courses will turne to their hurt that imagine them.

Reasons. 1.

Prou. 14. 22.

First, their successe will not answere to their expectations, they shall faile of that which they fullie assure themselues of: as it is said, *Doe they not erre that imagine euill?* Where the question is not proposed in way of doubting, but of certieintie, as of a thing that is cleere and manifest, and in no wise to bee gaine said. Neuer any man of an hurtfull heart had his will satisfied, and his desire fulfilled to his contentment, and consequently according to his hope. Women commonly haue paine in breeding of child, and pangs in trauell, and comfort when they are deliuered: but malicious men conceiue ioy all the time that they goe great with their purposes, and most when they are bringing forth, and nothing but anger, and sorrow, and shame, when they see nothing but a mishapen monster, to be borne vnto them.

2 Secondly, though they seeme to preuaile for a time, and effect their purposes so as their hearts wished, yet somewhat hindreth their full comfort for the instant, as it did *Hamans*, and *Schabs*, and all be ouerturned in the ende, and themselues be overwhelmed therewith, as the case of *Human* and *Daniels* aduersaries testified.

3 Thirdly, though they should worke their willes, and bring their purposes to passe and escape vnpunished, as long as they liue, yet because there is a iudgement to begin when life is ended, they are nothing the better for being spared so long. All their cunning, all their craft, all their wiles and shifing will not serue the turne to wind themselues out of the woe that is denounced against them, and the wofull punishments that shall bee executed vpon them.

Instruction, that we vse our thoughts and mindes to better meditations and studies, then to nourish that by art which groweth too fast by nature. Our flesh breedeth an aptnesse and inclination to doe euill, and become hurtfull, that we shall not neede to beare our braines about it, but rather haue cause with all carefullnesse to bethink vs how we may shun and auoyd it. Let vs leaue that craft to the diuell which is the master and teacher of it, who laboureth to haue all to be his apprentices, and is most ready to informe euery one to be most expert and skilfull in that damnable trade of craftines. But neither himsele from the beginnig of the world to this day hath gained any thing by it, but desperate madnes and vexation, besides euerlasting damnation to come, neither any one of his seruants of all the millions of millions that haue learned of him, hath in any one thing bin the better by it, but euery way vnutterable the worse.

Consolation to the poore, simple, and harmelesse seruants of God, against whom the euill is intended, that it shall rebound vpon the authors, and returne vpon the practisers, and neuer light vpon them. Many hearts are wishing their hurt; many minds are musing how to worke it: many tongues are consulting who shall doe it: many hands are readie to execute it: many mouthes insulting ouer them that shall suffer it, and all this while the only watchman of Israel, and the keeper of the Church doth laugh them to scorne. He maketh their minds to mistake that which they looked at: he maketh their hearts to bee filled with teares: he maketh their tongues to bespeake their owne miserie: he maketh their hands to be hurtfull to themselues: and he maketh his people to sit safely in the midst of them. And this is truly affirmed by *Eliphaz*, and warranted by the spirit of God in the booke of *Iob*. He scattereth the denises of the craftie: so that their hands cannot accomplish that which they doe enterprise. He taketh the wise in their craftinesse, and the counsell of the wicked is made foolish. They meet with darkenesse in the day time, and grope at noone day as in the night. But he saueth the poore from the sword, from their mouth, and from the hand of the violent man.

But to the counsellors] Holesome counsell is comfortable to them that giue it, as well as profitable to them that take it.

If the tongue perswade to that which is right, and the heart agree with the perswasion of the tongue, whatsoeuer successe his words doe find in others, he is sure to finde ioy and gladnesse in his owne soule. The same blessing which *Dauid* pronounced vpon *Abigail*, for procuring of peace by her counsell, the Lord doth promise and pronounce, and will performe to euery one whose affection and behauiour is like to *Abigails*. *Blessed, saith hee, bee thy counsell, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood.* And our Sauiour extendeth it generallie to all that labour vprightly, and in due manner to make peace, saying, *Blessed are the peace makers, for they shall be called the children of God,* Mat 5.9.

1. Sam. 25. 33.

Reasons. I.

First, no man can soundly seeke to reconciles man to God, or one man to another, or giue direction for his neighbours welfare, vnlesse he himselfe be reconciled to God, and peaceable towards men, and haue Christian loue in his heart; and those graces are neuer separated from holy comfort and gladnes. For the same sappe that sendeth forth the one, doth in like manner also yeeld the other, as the Apostle testifieth: *The fruite of the spirit is loue, ioy, peace, &c.* And in another place; *The kingdom of God is not meate and drinke, but righteousness, and peace, and ioy in the holie Ghost.*

Gal. 5. 22.

Rom. 14. 17.

2 If their counsell be imbraced and followed, the good effect thereof with Gods blessing, will minister cause of reioycing, besides thanks and kindnesse which the parties holpen by their counsell will yeeld vnto them: as *Dauid* to *Abigail*, and *Naaman* to *Elisha*, and the *Saylor* and *Lydia* to *Paul*: Act. 16. 17. 33. 34.

3 Thirdly, though their aduise bee reiected, yet as *Isaiah* saith, their reward is with the Lord, and they shall bee glorious in his eyes. And their faithfull dealing will bring them both comfort and praise, as *Jonathan* found in seeking to pacifie his fathers displeasure vniustly kindled against *Dauid*.

Isa 49. 4. 5.

Vse.

Instruction to moue vs to be frequent and diligent in so good a seruice, whereof there is so much neede, and opportunitie of imployment (for worke may be had euery where) and so good a recompence for our trauell, as ioy is, and therefore Gods fauour, and therefore Gods blessing with eternall glorie. And what though

though there be oppositions against vs, as all faithfull peace-makers shall meete froward persons that will bee vnpeaceable, yet if the God of peace be at peace with vs, and protector of vs, what cause haue we to stand in any feare? he would not promise vs ioy, vnlesse he were resolved to performe it: and he would not encourage vs to be ioyfull, vnlesse our state were safe and happie. And why then are we so timorous to speake when wee see dissension among equals, contempt of superiours, oppression of inferiours, sinning against mens owne soules, and warre against the Lord himselfe? Is it because we would not giue offence? It is an offence to be silent at the offences committed against God, and the hurt that men doe to themselves and their neighbours. Is it because we would auoide trouble and displeasure, and keepe our selves from griefe and sorrow? The way to doe that is to please God, who can make them whose anger wee feare, to fauour vs, and be meanes of our peace and consolation. But in counselling of peace we must looke to these things, first, that we be iustly called to deale in that particular case, lest *medling with the strife that belongeth not vnto vs, we be as one that taketh a dog by the eares.* Secondly, that we make no attonement betweene wicked men in their wickednesse, as *Hester* would not make *Haman* and *Ashuerus* friends when they were fallen out: for how much concord had bene betweene *Haman* and the King, so much discord would haue bin betweene the King and the Church. So that in setting agreement betweene man and man, it is good to set variance betweene a man and his sinne, and to leaue sinfull men at variance, whose reconciliation doth tend to the dishonour of God, and the hurt of his people.

Preu. 16. 17.

Reprooffe and terror of makebates, which are counsellours of *vs.* contention, of sinfulness, and wrong doing; which shall be handled in a fitter place, when we come to these words: *Without wood the fire is quenched, and without a talebearer strife ceaseth.* Chap. 26. 20. In the meane time let them bee admonished that incense great men, as Landlords, and Magistrates, and Masters against their poore, weake inferiours that liue vnder them. The Lord will heare their cries and groanes, not onely against the mightie ones that lay too heauie burdens vpon them, but also against all those

that haue been meanes and causers of it. And be this remembered withall on both sides, as well on their part that bee so easily perswaded to rigour and crueltie, as of theirs that moue them to it, or encourage them in it, that this aduise doth not onely imbitter them against their vnderlings, who seeme to bee altogether in their power, but also imboldeneth them against their maker, who onely hath all power and soueraignetic ouer them.

Verse. 21. *The punishment of iniquite shall not befall the iust: but, the wicked are full of euill.*

Afflictions and corrections may come vpon the righteous, but no reuenging curse tending to destruction, as if they were abiects. But the wicked are full of euill both of guiltines, and continuall practise, according to the corruption of their hearts, which the righteous are purged from, and therefore also of those punishments which the righteous escape.

Doct.

Though the Lord afflict the godly, as well as the godlesse, yet it is done in farre different manner.

He commeth as a father in mercie and mildnes to the one, and dealeth as a Iudge, or rather anemie, in wrath and seueritie with the other. He commeth with his pruning knife to cut off the superfluous sprigges and braunches of the one, and with a keene axe in his hand to hew downe by the rootes the flockes and bodies of the other. And this difference is spoken of in the foureteenth chapter of this booke, vers. 32. *The wicked shall be cast away for his naughtines: but the righteous hath hope in his death.* And this difference is spoken of in the seuen and twentieth of Iſaiah, verse 7. *Hath he smitten him, as hee smote those that smote him? or is hee slaine according to the slaughter of them that were slaine by him?* That is, hath the Lord plagued Iſrael his Church and people in such a grieuous manner as he hath destroyed their enemies? it is manifest he hath not. And this difference is spoken of in the eighth chapter to the Romans, verse 1. *that there is no damnation to them that are in Christ Iesus that walke after the spirit, as there is to them that walke after the flesh.*

Chap. 11. 31.

The foure reasons wherewith the last doctrine of the former chapter

chapter was proued, doe evidently confirme this point: and therefore to auoide prolixitie, and vnnecessarie repetitions, wee referre the reader to that place.

Instruction, to labour to be vnlike to sinfull men in behauiour, *Vse. I.*
as we are desirous to haue a better condition. Let vs set our selues as enemies against the dominion and kingdome of iniquitie, as they doe yeeld themselves to be subiects and slaues vnto it: let vs seeke to cleanse our selues from all filthinesse both of the flesh and spirit, and be filled with the graces of the holy Ghost, and the fruites of the same, as they are full of sinnes, and vnrighteousnesse.

For the wicked not to conceiue the better of their owne case, nor the goodly to like the worse of theirs, because externally all things seeme to happen alike to both sides: for there cannot bee so great a disparitie betweene any earthly things, though neuer so contrarie one to another, as there is betweene their estates, notwithstanding that in shew and appearance they are alike.

Verse 22. *The lying lippes are abomination to the Lord: but they that deale truly are his delight.*

THe sense is plaine enough of it selfe, if the supplie bee made of that which is vnderstood in both the clauses. The Lord abhorreth lying lips, that is, those persons that abuse their lippes to lying, which will also bee false in their deedes: and hee is well pleased with them that deale faithfully, which will likewise bee true in their words.

Euery lyer is a loathsome person, God doth neuer hate any thing that is not hatefull, and that must needs bee odible which hee abhorreth, and especially when it is abomination, which is in hie degree abominable vnto him. And that hee is so affected towards lyers, his owne word in other places doth testifie. As when he saith in this booke, *These sixe things doth the Lord hate: Prou. 6.17: yea his soule abhorreth seuen: the haucie eyes, and a lying tongue, and the hands that shed innocent blood, &c.* Yee may know by their companions among whom they are marshalled, what account he maketh of them. And so in the reuelation of S. Iohn,
Z 3 hee

Reuch. 11. 8.

he declareth his detestation of them by reckoning vp their sel-
lowes, and describing their grievous punishment. *The fearefull
and vnbeleeuing, and the abominable, and murderers, and whoremon-
gers, and sorcerers, and idolaters, and all lyers shall haue their part
in the lake, which burneth with fire and brimstone, which is the second
death.*

Reasons. I.

First, nothing is more contrarie to the nature of God, who is
infinitely true, and trueth it selfe, then guile and falsehood is.
And nothing maketh men more like to sathan, and workers of his
will, then lying. So our Saujour told the wicked vnbeleeuing
Iewes: *Yee are of your father the diuell, and the lustes of your father
ye will doe. He abode not in the trueth, because there is no trueth in
him. When he speaketh a lie, then he speaketh of his owne: for hee is a li-
er, and the father thereof.* It is his inother tongue, and natie lan-
guage to lie; when he vttereth any true sentence it is but borrow-
ed, and that also he cannot truely deliuer, without grosse deceit
and dissimulation.

Col. 3. 9.

2 Secondly, lying is a worke of the old man, and that which mis-
becommeth the children of God, and lyers such as giue them-
selues vnto it, are vnregenerate, and as yet the children of wrath
and subiect to damnation.

3

Thirdly they are iniurious to them whom they mis-informe,
making them to belecue errors, and many times, many euill con-
sequents insue vpon it.

Eph 4. 25.

And therefore the Apostle exhorteth all that are effectually re-
generate, *to cast off lying, and to speake euery man trueth vnto his
neighbour, because we are members one of another.*

Vse. I.

Instruction, to worke vpon our owne hearts so, as that we com-
ming also to hate lying, God may loue vs for trueth, and not haue
vs in detestation for falsehood. If we cause him to abhorre our
lippes for our vntrueths to men, he will abhorre our prayers and
thankesgiuing, and whatsoeuer shall proceede out of our lippes
to him. And it is not enough to leaue lying in respect of hereaf-
ter, but to lothe the sinne of it that hath been committed by vs
heretofore. When *Iob* knew that his words were displeasing to
the Lord, though they were few, and onely rash and vnadvised,
and he himselfe by error was deceiued in them, he abhorred him-
selfe

Iob 42. 6.

selfe, and repented in dust and ashes: how much more then ought wee to doe it, which haue more prouoked God with innumerable false speeches, and that knowingly and with purpose of deceiuing, and hee doth professe that they haue been, and are abominable to him? And what though wee haue sometimes kept our selues from blame by telling of lies? What though wee haue delighted others, and obtained fauour to our selues thereby? What though we haue made our gaine and commonitie of it? Will all this, if this were the winning of all the world, be able to counteruaile the high displeasure of God, and the losse of his fauour, together with the forsaking of our owne saluation? And hereby shall we know that we bee soundlie purged from lying, if we doe not onely forbear to lie, but bee utterly vnwilling that any other should tell a lie for vs. For that is the note of a righteous man that he *hateth lying words*, as well as *Prou. 13. 3.* forbearth to speake them. And they shall bee shut out of the kingdome of heauen together, which loue, and which make lies, *Rom. 1. 22. 15.*

Consolation, to them that loue the trueth and exercise it: the same God that hateth liars so deadly, is as well pleased with true men that affect, and practise that which he loueth so dearly. Be it therefore that they are maligned for saying that which true is, and haue not onely purchased euill will, but hard dealing, and that at their hands which seeme to be able to beare downe all before them; yet know and remember that God maketh account of thee: for thou art his delight: and those that bee his fauourites shall find his fauour effectuall against all aduersaries, for safetie and protection.

But they that deale truly, &c. That trueth which is acceptable *Doct.* to God consisteth both in speaking, and doing.

Nothing can please him but the image of that which is in him, and the streames which flow from him, as doth this reall and operative trueth, and not that which is verball and in word onely.

This is testified of the Lord Iesus Christ the deerey beloued sonne of God, who is proposed to vs for a perfect example to imitate, *that he did no wickednesse, as no deceit was found in his mouth.* *Ioh. 8. 33. 9.*

First,

Reasons. 1

First, his word in many places doth commaund both, and that equally, and no where doth disperse with the want of either.

2

Secondly, his spirit doth infuse both, and that inseparably, and maketh euery man that hath attained to the one to be able to vse the other. That which S. Iohn setteth downe in a more generall manner doth strongly confirme this particular point. *If anie man sinne not in word, he is a perfect man and able to bridle all the bodie.* His meaning is not that some bee absolute without sinne in word, and perfect, without infirmitie in goodnes: but that many be gracious without sinfulness, though they haue their slips, in speeches: and sincere, without wickednes, though they haue their frailties, in behauiour.

3

Thirdly, both are infallible, and essentiall fruites of regeneration: and the Apostle doth perswade vs thereby to declare our selues to be of the number of the saints, and faithfull, saying; *Cast off lying, and let him that stole, steale no more,* Ephes. 4. 25. 28.

4

Fourthly, both are required of them, that would know, and manifest themselues to be naturall members of the Church in this life, and inheritors of saluation in the life to come. *Lord, saith David, who shall dwell in thy Tabernacle? who shall rest in thy holy mountaine? He, saith God, that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth in his heart.*

Psal. 15. 1. 2.

Vse. 1.

Instruction, 1. if we would haue the constant credit of honestie among men, or the comfort of it in our owne soules, or the allowance of it in Gods presence, that wee bee not more smooth in words, then faithfull in workes: that men may not more belecue vs to be true in speeches, then the Lord shall discern vs to bee trustie in actions.

2

Not to be ouerhastie to receiue their reports, whom we are able to conuince of vnfaithfulness in behauiour. If God giue vs a caueat to looke to them, and be ware of them, if he commend none to vs for credible, but such as are righteous, why should wee set light by his certificate, and be credulous to hearken to sinfull persons? especially sithence of all others, they are most readie to fill mens eares with pernicious and hurtfull informations.

Verse 23. *A prudent man concealeth knowledge: but the heart of fooles publisheth foolishnesse.*

A Prudent man, he that is of good discretion, and hath learned to be wary and circumspect, concealeth knowledge, not that he shutteth it vp altogether, without any vse or benefit of it to others: for that were contrarie to the profession which the Prophet maketh of that wherein euery godly man ought to follow him; *I haue not hid thy righteousness within my heart, but I haue declared thy truth and thy saluatiō; I haue not concealed thy mercie and thy truth from the great congregation.* Psal. 40. 10. And that were contrarie to the testimonie which is giuen of wise men, chap. 15. 7. *The lippes of the wise doe spread abroad knowledge.* But he will obserue all good circumstances of speaking, that it be in time and place, when good opportunitie doth require it, and good effect is like to bee wrought by it. And contrariwise the heart of a foole which leadeh his tongue (for guide it doth not) doth set the tongue on worke either to vter bad matter, or that which is good in bad manner, that euery man may see the folly which is in it.

It is not good for any man to speake as much, and as often as he can, but as often, and as much as he ought. Many wise sayings and sentences, are inserted by the spirit of God into this booke, to teach men how to be heedfull for the obseruation of this rule. As when it is said, that *the tongue of the wise vseth knowledge aright;* Chap. 15. 2. And that *a foole powreth out all his mind: but a wise man keepeth in till afterwards;* Chap. 29. 11. Doct.

First, this sparing of speech, when men reserue themselves for fit occasions, and only vter that which serueth for vse, doth giue a cleere testimony of a minde that is stored with vnderstanding and iudgement. And this reason our text in hand doth offer vnto vs, when it is said, that a wise man hideth knowledge, as a foole on the other side doth exercise the contrarie. Wee deeme them not the most thrifte husbands and wealthiest men that will locke vp nothing in their coffers, nor keepe anything close in their purses, but carrie al their monie in their hands, and shew it to euery com-
mer by; and so doe they that haue no more matter within their Reasons. I.

hearts, then all the standers by shall heare their lipes deliuer.

- 2 Secondly, it is a point of humilitie to bee silent in modestie; as pride, and conceitednesse maketh men desirous to heare themselves speaking.

- 3 Thirdly, their words are so much more desireable, and better accepted as they are rare, and few, and seasonable. *How good is a word in due season?* saith the Scripture. *And a word spoken in his place is as apples of gold upon pictures of silver.* The ointment that is close kept in a boxe wil yeeld a sweeter sauour when it is powred out, then that which is continually open. And wine fresh from the vessell hath a better relish, then that which was drawne long before there was neede of it, or any to drinke it.

Prou. 15. 23.
Prou. 25. 11.

Vse. 1.

Instruction, to learne moderation and keepe measure in speaking, vnlike to them that be talkatiue and exceede too farre in multiplying of words. What though it be true that we say, and so we know, and are able to proue it? Doth euery trueth besite euery time? Should all men alwaies bee speaking all that they know? It would bee a great meanes to hinder the increase of knowledge. Some be talking when they haue more neede to heare; some be teaching, when they haue more neede to learne: and many wrong themselves, and them that are present, in not giuing place to others that are more sufficient and better able to speake. So did not *Elihu*, he preferred his elders, though not his betters, before himselfe. Hee would not open his mouth before his turne came, and that he saw *Iob*, and his three friends to swerue out of the way on both hands.

Iob. 34. 4. 5. &c.

- 2 Reproose of those that destinate all their speeches, and that in the ministerie of the Gospell, to the setting forth of their owne praises. It may truly be said of many, that they preach not Christ so much as themselves, contrarie to the faithfulness of *Paul*, who preached not himselfe, but the Lord Iesus Christ. Their chiefe labour is not to win glory to God, and men to saluation: but credit to themselves, and men to the admiration of their gifts and learning. This they principallie aime at, that all may be affected with their elocution; that al may see the fruit of their wits; that al may discern of their skill in the tongues: that al may witnes their paines in reading: that all may wonder at their depth of iudgement.

ment. If those be things that their hearts doe chiefly desire, wee must conclude of them that their hearts doe publish foolishnes.

Verse 24. *The hand of the diligent shall beare rule : but the deceitfull shall be vnder tribute.*

THe hand of the diligent, that is, diligent men who vse their hands, or other members of their bodies, or else their minds to some honest and profitable trauell according to their calling, shall beare rule, and attaine to some good place of estimation. But idle persons whom want and other occasions draw to deceitfull courses to shift for themselves, as wee haue shewed in the fourth verse of the tenth chapter, shall be made vnderlings, and brought into subiection and seruilitie.

They which are laborious and faithfull in meane places, doe *Doct.* take the way to rise to an higher degree.

True it is that diuers attaine not to such greatnesse as others doe, and yet be no lesse diligent then others are, but the Lord maketh their inferioritie a step towards their heauenly aduancement: and they are not without estimation in that low estate: and God seeth their fruite to bee better, and their comfort to bee more there, than if they were raised vp to higher preferment. Otherwise, they that serue God in what place soeuer, are sure to grow greater. The Scripture proposeth examples hereof, and sheweth how the point hath been verified in former ages. *Iacob* at the first set himselfe to seruice, and was at the commandement of an other man, but at the last, being painful and true, he was able to keep seruants himselfe, and other men were at his commandement. *Ioseph* when hee came into *Egypt* was bought and sold as a poore bondman, but being faithfull in euery place that hee came into, hee was promoted in euery place that hee came into. When hee was a seruant, when hee was a prisoner, and especiallie when hee was Prince. *Dauid* had once the charge of a flocke of sheepe, and thereof was not a little heedefull: but afterwards hee had the leading of an armie of men, and lastlie, was exalted to the throne of a glorious kingdome.

First, promotion is from the Lord, and hee setteth vp, and put- *Reasons. 1.*

teth downe, according to his owne will. And therefore when he hath fitted men to authoritie, by humbling them with labour, he assigneth their places wherein they shall stand, and by his providence preferreth them to the same: some to bee Magistrates, some to be Captaines, some to be Ministers, some to be Maisters, some to bee Stewards, some to haue one office, and some another.

2 Secondly, the hand of the diligent maketh rich, and riches cause them that are wise and honest to be put into authoritie, and imployed in the townes and places wherein they dwell: or at least they grow to be housekeepers and beare rule in their owne families.

3 Thirdly, painefulnesse with wisdom and faithfulnessse doth cause great personages to looke after them. They entertaine them into seruice: they put them in trust with their affaires: they giue countenance vnto them: and they many times are meanes of their rising and preferment. And in this sense is that saying: *Thou seest that a diligent man in his businesse standeth before Kings, and standeth not before the base sort;* Prou. 22. 29.

Vse. Reproofe of their follie that are ashamed and disdain to take any paines vnlesse it be in seruing of sinne and lust, and thereto they make themselues slaues and drudges. And what is it that meaneth them to such nicenesse, that they will not vouchsafe to put their hands to any worke, or set their mindes to seeke for knowledge whereby they may bee fit for some good profession? The feare of contempt: the doubt that they shall bee little regarded, if they applied themselues to such a base kinde of life. It is not according to their birth and bringing vp, to spend their time in labour, or studie: it will bee a hinderance to their preferment that they looke for. But will they thus contrarie the word of God, and crosse the trueth of his holy spirit? Will they say that diligence doth make men contemptible, when he saith, the diligent hand shall beare rule? will they say that idlenes doth bring men to promotion, when he saith, that the idle shall be vnder tribute? He will as well crosse and contrarie them in their state, and desires, and make them feeble his words to be true. Who seeth not what beggerie, and want, and miserie, they cast themselues into? Are they not driuen to sell away, and depart

depart with that inheritance and patrimonie which their parents haue left them? Are they not compelled to borrow and shift, and to sincke deeply into debt? And it is a true prouerbe, that *the borrower is seruant to the man that lendeth.* For further vse of this point, see the fourth verse of the tenth chapter, in the application of the second doctrine. Prou. 22. 7.

Verse. 25. *Heauines in the heart of a man doth bring it downe: but a good word reioyceth it.*

Heaumes of heart, that is, such sorrowes or feares, as are not godly, and effects of faith, but proceeding from infidelity, or carnall respects, especially being excessiue, doth bring down the heart, nor humbling it kindly, so as pride may be taken away, but either filling it with discouragement, or distemper, against which the Prophet wrestled with sundry conflicts: *Why art thou cast down my soule, and art vnquiet, or tumultuous within me?* Psal. 42. 5. Now withall he prescribeth the remedie whereby this disease of hurtfull sorrow and peniuenes may be cured, and that is with good words. For the comfortable speech of a friend, but especially the wholesome word of God, declaring the remission of sinnes, and the fauour of God, expelleth the heauines of the heart, and refresheth it with ioy and comfort.

Immoderate griefe doth turne men to great hurt and annoyance. As fleshly mirth doth much corrupt mens minds, and stirre them vp to vanitie; so worldly sorrow doth greatly weaken their hearts and dull their spirits, whereby they are hindred from the performance of many good duties. And so much is meant in that place, where it is said that by the sorrow of the heart, the mind is heauie. Doct.
When *Ioshua* was inclining to too much feare and discomfort, for the losse of his men at their going vp against *Ai*, and the euill consequents that were likelie to follow, the Lord would not suffer him to giue place thereunto, saying, *Get thee vp: wherefore liest thou thus upon thy face?* Prou. 15. 13.
He tooke notice, and gaue a censure of this inward affection of his heart, somewhat exceeding measure, by the gesture of his bodie. Iosh. 7. 10.

First, the health and strength of the bodie is thereby impaired. Reas. 2. 2.

and the life it selfe is many times shortned by that meanes. *A ioyfull heart causeth good health, but a sorrowfull mind drieth the bones,* Prou. 17.22. It pearceth to that which is within, and bringeth weakenesse vpon the strongest parts.

- 2 Secondly, such as are oppressed with cares and griefe are made vnmeete for the seruices of God, who indeede doth require feare, but commaundeth likewise to reioyce with trembling: Psal. 2.11. How can they call vpon God in any seruency, when deadnes hath wholly possessed them? How can they be thankfull, and offer acceptable praises to God when they are voide of al ioy and cheerefulness? And how can they attend vnto his word, when their thoughts are altogether busied in the contemplation of their owne miserie? The message was very comfortable which *Moses* brought to the Israelites in *Egypt*, when the Lord told them, that he would deliuer them from the burdens and bondage of the *Egyptians*, and would take them for his people, and be their God, &c. but it is said they *harkened not to him for anguish of spirit, and cruell bondage,* Exo. 6.9.

- 3 Thirdly, it maketh men lesse diligent and profitable in their callings, whether it be in their seuerall trades, or in places of superiority to gouerne, or of inferioritie to obey.

- 4 Fourthly, it bereaueth them of the benefite and comfort of any Christian societie wherein they are neither apt to doe good, nor receiue good. It taketh away their cheerefulness: it disableth their tongues of speaking fruitfully: it stoppeth their eares from hearkning attentiuely: their presence is not very delightfull to others, and the companie of others is not much regarded of them.

Vse. 1. Instruction, 1. to preuent this worldly sorrow by preseruing of godly ioy, and that is by keeping the peace of a good conscience with an vpriight heart, and holy behauiour, either shunning of sinne that we runne not into it, or soundly sorrowing for it, when we haue committed it. Looke how much innocencie and sinceritie any man hath, so much comfort his heart shall inioy, and according to the measure of guiltinesse there will bee an inward, secret biting griefe and fearefulness.

- 2 When anguish and sorrow, when feare and troubles assault vs so strongly that we cannot repell them, let vs then obserue that holie

holy counsell which God, that can make it effectuell, doth offer here in this place vnto vs, and that is to haue a recourse to faithfull comforters. He sendeth vs to them, he encourageth vs to go, he assureth vs of successe, hee hath alwaies performed, that neuer any was left vnholpen, that sought helpe at his hand according to this his direction. *Elihu* speaketh of this to *Iob*, that when a man is stricken with sorrow vpon his bed, and griefe of his bones is sore, so that his life causeth him to abhorre bread and his soule daintie meate, that his flesh is consumed, and his bones chatter, and his soule draweth to the graue, and his life to the buriers, yet a faithfull messenger of God, one of a thousand deliuering his message faithfull from God, will heale all this in them that giue credit to him, and set them in as good case as euer they were before. For God which can doe all things and formed all things, hath vnder-taken to giue such a blessing to the words of his seruants, and chiefly them by whose ministration he speaketh to his own people. *I create* (saith hee) *the fruite of the lips to bee peace*, peace, that is, (true, perpetual, and most constant comfort) *vnto them that are far off, and to them that are neere: for I will heale him.* *Isai.* 57. 19. Hereof the keeper of the prison, whom *Paul* and *Silas* conuerted, had happie experience, and thereby was preserved from destroying himselfe. *Act.* 16. 28. Hereof three thousand at once, whom *Peter* conuerted, had happie experience, being deliuered both from their feares, and sinfulnessse. *Act.* 2. 37.

To collect all good arguments whereby wee preuaile against our dread and sorrowes that grow from our afflictions and troubles. As who imposeth them vpon vs but the Lord? And to what end doth the Lord so impose them, but in mercie and wisdom, as a most skilfull and faithfull physition, for our profit? Haue not our betters endured more, and yet were beloued and blessed of God both for the present, and afterwards? Haue not we deserued farre greater iudgements, euen destruction it selfe, and is it much if wee bee onely scourged so fauourable with such small stripes of easie rodes, by a louing father who doth prepare vs thereby to so great comfort and glorie?

Verse 26. The righteous is more excellent then his neighbour: but the way of the wicked will deceiue them.

THe righteous, that is, euery godly man who hath attained to vprightnes, though not to perfection of righteousnes, is better then his neighbour, is better beloued, and graced of God, and more esteemed of godly wise men, and hath that in him which maketh him more commendable then any other that is vnrighteous and sinfull; and so his way is answerable to his hope. But the wicked desiring, and seeking, and expecting a more excellencie about others, are notwithstanding contemptible, and grow in time to be contemned, and so their way deceiue them.

Doct.

Psalm. 16. 3.

Isa. 4. 5.

Reasons. 1.

Grace maketh good men to be the worthiest personages. As they goe before all the vnregenerate in vertue, so they go beyond them in honour: and as they exceede them in pietie, so they surmount them in excellencie. The testimonie which the Prophet giueth of them to God himselfe, by the inspiration of Gods spirit, doth make this manifest. *My goods, saith he, extend not to thee, but to the Saints that are in earth, euen to the excellent: all my delight is in them.* And *Isaiah* speaking of the same sort of people, though neuer so meane and poore, saith, *that vpon all the glorie shall be a defence.*

First, in regard of their condition in this present life they haue all prerogatiues, and preferments. By parentage euery one of them is Gods child: By dignitie they are all Kings: by inheritance, they haue title to heauen and earth: their foode is heauenly manna: their clothing is the righteousness of Christ: their attendants are the holy Angels: what should wee speake of other things, wherein one man is wont to excell many others, and thereby waxe glorious and become renowned? Who is wise besides them? who else hath any true fortitude in them? doe not all others in their follie bring shame vpon themselves? Hath not Satan subdued, and as it were trampled them vnder his feete? They are dealt with as bond men, and put to the fowleſt workes of impietie, and falsehood, lust, and lewdnes, and of all kinde of iniquitie.

Secondly,

Secondly, in respect of their state that shall bee in the life to come, which by no comparison can bee sufficiently expressed. They shall haue perfect happines, and bee made like vnto Iesus Christ, more excellent and puissant, then the most glorious Angels. When all the wicked shall be brought to the fulnes of contempt: when shame shall couer them: when they shall be trodden downe as the mire in the streetes.

Micah. 7. 10.

Instruction, to labour for excellency by those meanes whereby *Vse. I.* we may be made excellent, and that is by growing godly and religious. This way will not faile to effect it, and none other course without it, will be of any force to bring it to passe. Men may bee very wealtheie, and ignominious: they may haue gorgious apparel, and be contemptible persons: they may be honourable disceded, and yet without al honour. To conclude, neither strength of armes, nor eloquence of tongue, nor sharpenesse of wit, nor beautie of face, nor comelines of stature, nor boldnes of courage, nor any other externall thing, or gifts of minde vn sanctified, can so adorne and set forth one, as that thereby he may truely bee reputed for a man that is praise-worthie.

Reprooffe of such as of all others most vilifie and contemne them that are most gracious and godly. Which make them (according to *S. Pauls* saying) as the fith of the world, and the of- *1. Cor. 4. 13.* scourings of all things. Which make lesse reckoning of them that are truely religious, then of the dust which they sweepe out of their houses, and cast to the dunghill. They had rather haue their children and friends to bee Beare-wards, or chimnie-sweepers, then mortified and faithfull Christians. How different is their estimation from the testimonie of the holy Ghost? And therefore how little grace of the holy Ghost is wrought in their hearts?

S. Iames condemneth it for a haynous offence to haue a base *Iam. 2. 3.* opinion of the godly, and to put them behind wicked rich men for their pouertie: how grieuous then is their sinne which contemne and loath them and put the vilest before them, for their pietie? But one thing let them know, and that they shall in time to come both see and feelee, vnlesse in due time before, they see their fault, and feelee godly grieve for the same, that they shall

Psalm. 15. 4.

neuer inherit glory with the righteous in heaven, that be despisers of them in earth. Nay not so onely, but God doth condition with them that would haue an habitation aboue with him, that *wile persons must be contemned in their eyes, and they must honour them that feare the Lord.*

The other clause of this verse is the same in sense, and almost in words with the eighteenth verse of the former chapter, where it is said, that *The wicked worketh a deceitfull worke*; and therefore we referre the reader to that place for the doctrine of it.

Verse 27. *The deceitfull man roseth not that which hee tooke in hunting; but the riches of the diligent man are precious.*

THe deceitfull, &c. That is a prouerbiall kind of speech, signifying that they shall not inioy nor haue the benefit of that which they get by craft and falsehood. If the whole similitude be fully set downe, the meaning will the better appeare. Euen as hunters many times when they take a pray, yet tast not of it, nor fare the better for it: (for dogges may eate it vp, or some other occurrent may fall out to deprive them of it, as many lets come betweene the mouth and the morsell) so vniust and deceitfull men, though they attaine to wealth and riches, may bee assured that they shall neuer haue any sound profit or comfort by them. Where by the way, may be seene the different end of the hunting that was vsed in those daies, and of this which is practised of many in our times. They made it an exercise for profit, & thereby, as it may appeare, provided foode for themselves, and the families wherein they liued, as is to be seene in the example of *Esaue* himselfe, who vsed to bring home venison to his father. But it is ordinarie now with diuers to bestow a great part of their time to hunt meerely for pleasure, without any commoditie. They voluntarilie defraud themselves of the pray which they take, their households haue not the better chere by their hunting, but the worse. They consume themselves, and wast their goods, and impouerish their wiues and children, by following their sports, and neglecting their estate: by seeding so many dogges, as that thereby they faile both of care and abilitie to prouide for their people. *But*
the

the riches of the diligent are precious, that is, those things which they that are both faithfull and industrious doe gaine and get by lawfull meanes, shall doe them good, and serue for their comfort.

Euill meanes of getting may bring goods to mens hands, but *Doct.* not to their vse.

Riches may come according to their desire, but either not to tarric with them, or not to doe them seruice, so that they will turne to a vexation at their departure, or to clog & burden them whiles they remaine. *As the Partridge layeth egges, which she hatcheth not:* *Jerem. 17. 11.* so, saith *Jeremy*, he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leaue them in the middest of his dayes, and at his end shall be a foole. All deceitfull persons fall into that absurditie, which by our common prouerbe is derided; they count their chickens before they bee hatched, so soone as they haue egges in their nest, they conclude of a brood of comfort and happinesse, which God hath concluded that they shall neuer obtaine. *Achan* hunted after the consecrated gold, and siluer, and execrable garment; but albeir hee *Iosh. 7. 15.* caught them he rosted them not, but was burnt himselfe, with all his, and whatsoeuer he had before.

The Amalakites which sacked Ziglag, and tooke the spoile of the citie, with *Davids* wiues and substance, were prosperous hunters in shew at the first, yet they rosted not their pray, but prouided it for *Davids* vse, and *David* dealt with them, as with beasts that are hunted into the net.

First, the vse and comfort of all things proceedeth onely from *Reasons. 1.* Gods gift and blessing, and standeth not in the meere getting, and possession of the: and all deceitfull persons both in a generall respect, because of their wickednesse, and in a speciall regard for their fraudulent and guilefull behauour, are subiect to malediction, and to be cursed in euery thing that they deale in, or which belongeth vnto them.

Secondly, though the vngodly haue many times power and abilitie to increase their goods, yet the vse and fruition of al good things is appropriated peculiarly and intayled to the righteous, for whom the wicked are set on worke, and not for themselues.

And so much doth the holie Ghost expresselic testifie: *Surely*

to a man that is good in his sight, God giveth wisdom and knowledge, and ioy: but to the sinner he giveth paine to gather, and to heape up to give to him that is good before God; Eccles. 2.26.

Iob speaketh to the same purpose, saying, *Though hee should heape up silver as the dust, and prepare rayment as the clay, hee may prepare it, but the iust shall put it on, and the innocent shall divide the silver;* Iob 27.16.17.

Admonition to withhold our hands from direption, that wee take not from others that which will turne to no good for our selues. Wee bring griefe, and peraduenture also want vpon them, but we bring sinne with greater sorrow and misery vpon our selues: it may bee their hindrance, but it will bee our owne vndoing, vlesse we leaue off and repent, and as much as wee are able, make restitution. So that our pray will not onely not come to our dish, but deuoure the rest of our meate, which otherwise might be for our nourishment: and by this meanes our neighbour is hurt, our labour is lost, our conscience is wounded, our state is cursed, our soules indaungered, and that which is worst of all, our God is offended, and prouoked to displeasure. And therefore let not other mens successe in this vothrifice manner of gaying, allure vs to follow the same trade with them, sithence we foreknow the vnhappy euent that will fall out in the end. Though spoile and crueltie, though rapine, and robberie, though filching, and stealing, though gaiming, lying, falsehood, or any indirect courses doe set vp men for a time, yet downe they must, and be driuen to confesse that all their sinfull gettings were vanitie and losse, and all their vnlawfull commodities pernicious and hurtfull to them.

Doct. 2.

But the riches, &c. Wealth well gotten by good men, is great in value, whatsoeuer it be in quantitie.

Eccles. 4.6.

As the bread of deceit is sweetest, so the riches of iniquitie seeme best to vnrighteous persons: and sluggards-like nothing so well, as that which commeth with least trauell, and without much paines taking. *Better, say they, is an handfull with ease, then two handfulls with labour and vexation of spirit.* And euery thing is a vexation of their spirit which putteth them to any paines of bodie. But the Lord testifieth the contrary and teacheth his people

ple both by word and effect, that that onely is of worth and estimation which his seruants obtaine by lawfull means, and his blessing vpon them. And because this point is most true, and the world beleueeth not that any truth is in it, hee confirmeth the same in diuers places: as Chap. 15. 16. *Better is a little with the feare of the Lord, then great treasure and trouble therewith.* That is, with feare, care, sorrow, or the checke of an euill conscience. So in the Psalme. 37. 16. *A small thing vnto the righteous, is better then great riches to the wicked and mightie.*

First, in respect of the giuer thereof, it is the Lords hand that bestoweth it vpon them as a testimonie of his loue, and an earnest of more excellent treasures. Now an Angell from the Kings owne hand in fauour, is more regarded then a pound from an other, vpon other occasions. And how great a substance may a man haue conueyed to him by receiuing a shilling, or tetter for possession of all that is passed ouer to him by deede of gifture? And how large demeanes may a man bee estated in by taking a turse in way of lyuene, and seison? Now though euerlasting life be principally confirmed to vs by the spirit of adoption, yet the Lord would haue his eternall fauour to his Saints to bee seene and acknowledged euen in his earthly benefites.

Secondly, it is sanctified vnto them by the word of God, with prayer, and thanksgiuing. 1. Tim. 4. 5.

Thirdlie, his blessing maketh it to serue and suffice them for all needefull vses: it satisfieth their hearts: it is competent for their bodies: it is sufficient for their families. And as their state is increased, so their hands are opened to distribute to the poore, and to contribute to the seruices of God, and euery way to shew their readines to doe good, so as God may haue glorie, his seruants refreshing, and their owne soules an euerlasting recompence of immortalitie.

Consolation to all godly, faithfull, and industrious persons, that they are euery way wealthie and rich: rich in glory which is reserued for them in heauen: rich in welldoing: rich in spirituall graces: rich in earthly substance, if enough of that which is deare and precious may make a man to be rich. That saying which is in the fifteenth Chapter of this booke, is not to be restrained to any

Prou. 15. 6.

one, but holdeth true for every one that feareth God, *that the house of the righteous hath much treasure.* Things that are costly and of great price, are not to be rated by comparison with the measure of baser matters, nor according to the roome which they fill vp. A little gold ouerualueth much leade or iron, many great pebbles are not matchable in worth with one pearle which is farre lesse then they are, a boxe full of rich diamonds, is better then a house full of woode, and straw, or other stufte that is course or common. And so standeth the case with good mens possessions; the blessing of God with his mercie and fauour doth conuert them into iewels for their vse and benefite, and worketh such comfortable effects by them, as all the treasures of the wicked can neuer yeeld vnto them.

Verse 28. *Life is in the way of righteousness, and in that path way there is no death.*

Life, &c. The meaning is, that they which are righteous men iustified by the merites of Christ, and sanctified by his spirit, and obedient to his will in working that which is agreeable to his word, are in state of life euerlasting. The life of grace they haue possession of already; the life of glory is assured to them by the life of grace: whosoever hath the one, can neuer faile of the other. And therefore it is said that there is no death in that path. They are deliuered from the first death, which hath power ouer all sinfull men, in this world: and they shall neuer come into the second, which is the portion of reprobates in the world to come. And this is confirmed by the testimonie of Christ himselfe, saying; *Verily, verily, I say vnto you, he that heareth my word and beleeueth in him that sent me, hath euerlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but hath passed from death to life.* The doctrine which the words would minister, hath been declared, and prosecuted in the nineteenth verse of the former chapter, where it is saide that *righteousnes leadeth to life*, and therefore it is needlesse to handle it againe in this place. Onely let thus much be spoken, that the holy Ghost doth not in vaine so often promise life to them that seeke, and serue him. He doth repeate it more then

twentie

twentie times in this one booke, besides the mention that the other parts of scripture doe make of it, almost euery where. It is therefore a point of certentie to them that lay hold on it: It is a point of difficultie, and not easilie beleueed: sithence God to helpe our hearts doth againe, and againe redouble it: and it is a point of great importance, requiring a serious and constant meditation, without which men grow barren, and carelesse in doing all good dueties: and by which they are made rich and plentiful in all holy seruices. The consideration of life, and of such a life will encourage the heart, and open the mouth, and strengthen the hands, and make the feet nimble to runne in the waies of righteousness: all that they can doe in obedience, they will account too little, and nothing that they suffer for wel-doing, they will thinke to much.

FINIS.

The Author to the Reader.

THou art to be aduertised, good Reader, that sundrie faults haue escaped in this Treatise, most by ouersight of him that copied it out and made it readie for the Presse; and some few were committed in the printing: the greatest part, and I thinke all, are here collected for thee in briefe; I pray thee take notice of them, and reforme them in their places according to this direction.

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